



St. Mary's School

1865 A Heritage of Purposeful Learning

Self Study 2007-2008

St. Mary's School provides a community in which intellectual curiosity and academic excellence combine with Catholic and democratic values to inspire and prepare responsible local, national, and global citizens.

**St. Mary's School Self Study
2007-08**

Presented to

the

Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools

for

Reaccreditation

September 2008

Submitted on behalf of the St. Mary's School community by

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Table of Contents

School Profile	1
Mission, Professional Excellence, and Graduate Portrait Statements	2
A Brief History of St. Mary's School	3
I. PNAIS Accreditation Process	4
II. Association Philosophy	9
III. School Mission	14
IV. Institutional Leadership	19
VI. Finance	30
VII. School Program	37
Computer Science	48
English	54
Fine Arts	63
Foreign Languages	73
Mathematics	79
Religion	89
Science	94
Social Studies	107
Health, Physical Education, and Athletics	116
Library	120
Advisor and Community Service Program	126
National Honor Society and Academic Clubs	132
Student Government and Non-Academic Clubs	137

	Summer School	141
VIII.	Administrative Practice and Personnel	146
IX.	Students	165
X.	School Plant	176
XI.	Health and Safety	180

School Profile

Which edition of the PNAIS Self Study was used?	September 2007
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Name of School: St. Mary's School of Medford, Inc.

City: Medford State: Oregon

Grade Range: 6-12 Division Structure (if applicable): Middle School and Upper School

Founding Date: 1865

Size of Board: 17 members Current Board Chairs: Doug Irvine and Catherine Dauterman

Date of Appointment: July 2007 Length of Term: 3 years

Current Head: Frank J. Phillips Date of Appointment: 2005

Brief Description of Campus, Facilities, and Surrounding Community.

The St. Mary's campus is roughly 23 acres with a current capacity to hold 500 students. There is a baseball field, softball field, soccer/football field as well as a full track, tennis courts, and a gym. The school is located just off the I-5 corridor in East Medford where approximately 80% of the current families reside. The immediate community comprises a retirement center, a gated living community, a shopping center, several professional office suites, and a major hospital.

Total Number of Employees (full-time) 57 (part-time) 7

In completing the following items, count each employee only once.

- Administrators (full-time) 6 (part-time) 0
- Teaching Staff (full-time) 40 (part-time) 5
- Non-teaching staff (full-time) 11 (part-time) 2

Total Opening Enrollment for 2007-2008 Academic Year: 430

Enrollment at Last Accreditation Visit: 343

What percentage of total revenue comes from: (percentages should add up to 100%)

- Tuition 80%
- Annual Gifts 16%
- Investment/Interest Income 2%
- Other 2%

Provide Tuition Range for 2007-2008 Academic Year: \$9500

Tuition Reductions (include financial aid, tuition remission, and merit awards)

- Tuition Reductions as a percentage of gross Tuition Revenue 17%
- Percentage of students receiving tuition reductions 63%

PNAIS Association Philosophy

The philosophy, principles, and practices of PNAIS schools are consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society; schools provide an intellectual environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject.

St. Mary's Mission Statement

St. Mary's School provides a community in which intellectual curiosity and academic excellence combine with Catholic and democratic values to inspire and prepare responsible local, national, and global citizens.

St. Mary's Professional Excellence

St. Mary's teachers inspire students to achieve their potential in thought, word, and deed. Creative and compassionate, they provide a supportive community that values excellence, integrity, and diversity. Our teachers share a visible enthusiasm for professionalism, innovation, and scholarship.

St. Mary's Portrait of a Graduate

St. Mary's School graduates students who can use critical thinking and knowledge to navigate with confidence in diverse settings and show compassion to others along the way. Our students appreciate the cultures and landscapes they encounter and lead lives guided by a true moral compass.

A Brief History of St. Mary's School

St. Mary's School was founded in the pioneer mining town of Jacksonville, Oregon, in 1865 by three members of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and was known as St. Mary's Academy. Operating as a twelve-year (the upper grades were limited to girls) boarding and day school, it served pioneer families in southern Oregon and northern California. St. Mary's graduated its first student in 1871.

St. Mary's moved to Medford in 1908 and in the late 1920s became coeducational, graduating its first boy in 1930. In 1948 the Sisters of the Holy Names transferred title of the school to Sacred Heart Parish which operated it as a twelve-year coeducational school for the next 13 years. In 1961 St. Mary's Elementary and High School separated into two schools when the present high school was built on Black Oak Drive.

In 1971 when Sacred Heart Parish determined it could no longer financially support two schools, a group of supporters raised funds, and gained permission from the Archbishop to incorporate as an independent, Catholic school, the first in the state of Oregon.

After a fire damaged Sacred Heart School in 1987 and representatives of the parish and larger community requested the St. Mary's Board of Trustees to transfer the seventh and eighth grades to St. Mary's School. With the approval of the Archbishop, St. Mary's Middle School opened in 1987 and a sixth grade was added in 1992.

In 1998 St. Mary's began its first capital expansion in 31 years with a five-phase building campaign. Since 1998 St. Mary's has completed an expanded parking facility, an all weather eight-lane track and upgraded athletic fields and a library/media and science center with three science labs and seven additional classrooms.

Enrollment in the school has increased from 320 students in 2005 to 430 in 2008.

PNAIS Accreditation Process

The Association has deep interest in schools using the accreditation process as a tool for self reflection and school improvement. The Visiting Team will read the self study and assess the school during the visit with an eye toward this interest.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Vincent Comerchero, Alastair Hunter

<h3>Major Standard</h3>

<p>The school has demonstrated a commitment to on-going school improvement through the successful completion of each step of the PNAIS accreditation process.</p>
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Good Practice #1: The school has reviewed its mission statement as the starting point in the self-study process.

1.1: Describe the way in which the mission statement was reviewed.

St. Mary's School began a review of the mission statement in the fall of 2005 following an extensive marketing study. Recognizing that the old mission statement was out of date and did not accurately reflect changes to the school, the board of trustees outlined the need to revise the mission statement as a major goal of its current strategic plan. The head of school then invited the entire faculty to participate. An *ad hoc* committee, composed of seven faculty members, three administrators, and one board member, met three times during the spring of 2006 to craft a new statement. The committee first reviewed the school's marketing study, which helped them to discern the core characteristics of the school. The committee then drafted thirty different mission statements and selected four finalists to present to the faculty in June of 2006. After a lengthy discussion and the revision of one of the options, the faculty unanimously endorsed the current statement. The board of trustees approved this statement on July 15, 2006.

1.2: Describe the way in which the mission statement was used as the starting point for the self-study.

At the fall 2007 faculty in-service, the self-study coordinators led the faculty and staff in an examination of the mission statement. The mission statement was projected onto a screen, and the key aspects of the mission statement were identified. Faculty and staff were then divided into groups to examine each aspect of the mission statement, how it is defined, and how it is realized in the life and program of the school. Each group brainstormed definitions of the mission statement's core elements, and also examined the program for ways in which those core elements are met. The various groups then gave presentations to the faculty on the various aspects of the mission statement they examined. The mission statement was also reviewed by the trustees, who reread it prior to answering the institutional leadership questions of the self study.

Good Practice #2: The school has conducted a self-study that provides for broad participation of the school community and full disclosure in the examination of strengths and weaknesses

2.1: Describe the manner in which the school conducted its self-study.

2.1.a: How were committees structured? What timeline was followed?

The school conducted the self study in a thoughtful, well organized, and inclusive manner. In the fall of 2006, the school sent three self-study coordinators including two department chairs and the vice-chair, now co-chair, of the board of trustees to the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools training workshop for self-study coordinators. The coordinators then met with the administration and established the composition of various committees to ensure diverse representation on the committees, as appropriate, of students, parents, faculty, staff, trustees, and members of the administration. The faculty coordinators in cooperation with the administration also developed a time line for the completion of the document that spelled out intermediate deadlines so that the coordinators would have sufficient time to edit drafts and return them to committees should revisions be deemed necessary. Chairs of the school program section committees were thus tasked with ensuring the completion of the documents relating to their sections. The chairs of the non-school program committee sections were given greater latitude in meeting with their committee members and completing the drafts of their sections during the course of the year.

2.1.b: Who was involved and at what point in various sections of the report?

The task of drafting the report was left to the committees. A list of the composition of various committees is available for review. The self-study coordinators served as editors, polishing the drafts of the sections and weaving them into a coherent narrative.

2.1.c: Describe the specific roles of faculty, administration, trustees, parents, students, and the larger community regarding information gathering, analysis, and recommendations.

St. Mary's School solicited broad participation of the school community in the process of information gathering, analysis, and the crafting of recommendations. Faculty members were involved heavily in information gathering, analyzing, and making recommendations relating to the various departments of the school program. Members of the administration, trustees, and parents fulfilled these tasks relating to the accreditation process, institutional leadership, finance, administrative practices and personnel, school plant, and health and safety sections. Students participated in information gathering, analysis, and the crafting of recommendations for the overall school program committee and the school mission committee. Finally, the faculty, staff, parents, and students were surveyed to provide valuable information to the school that was incorporated in the reports in both the descriptive and analytical sections of the report

2.1.d: How and to whom were drafts of the report disseminated?

A PDF version of the self study, minimally edited to protect information to which only employees and trustees should be privy will be posted to the school's website after submission to

the visiting team. The school community will be notified via e-mail and a website announcement that the self-study is available for viewing. Information edited from the study includes minutes of various committees, and confidential personnel and financial information.

2.2: From your experience with the self study, what would you do differently another time? How might the procedures be improved for others?

The self-study process by and large was a successful one, and the appointment of dual faculty coordinators lightened the workload considerably from the previous process. The school might revise its surveying procedures next time and consider administering random surveys in the future in order to enhance the validity of the results or in the case of the student body, the school might conduct a comprehensive survey of the entire student population for the same purposes.

Element #2a: The school has provided for broad participation in the self study by surveying its faculty and staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, alumni.

2a.1: What surveys tools were used in collecting information from faculty and staff, students, parents, and, if appropriate, alumni? How were the surveys conducted?

Faculty, staff, student, parent, and alumni surveys were conducted by means of Survey Monkey. Electronic invitations were issued to these constituencies and the results then discussed by members of the relevant self-study committees.

2a.2: How were the survey results tabulated, summarized, and shared with the necessary participating constituents? (Note: findings from the surveys will be referenced in other sections of the self study)

The results of the surveys were tabulated and summarized by Survey Monkey in easy-to-read formats that indicated the total number of respondents, raw numbers of each item, percentages of the total number of respondents for each item, and bar graphs. Faculty, staff, parent, student, and alumni survey results were shared electronically with all school constituencies who were invited to review them.

Good Practice #3: The school has addressed all major recommendations from its previous accreditation visit (only for schools going through re-accreditation)

3.1: Describe the steps taken to address these major recommendations since the last visit.

St. Mary's School had three principal recommendations from its last self study. These recommendations were to work to find ways for departments, grade level groupings and teams to meet; to consider the formation of a formal curriculum group or council, and to review responsibilities assigned to each individual as the school grows. In response, the school has scheduled early dismissal days once a month for departments, division teams, and curriculum groupings to meet. In addition, it has created a formal academic council which meets as needed to make major decisions affecting the curriculum, for instance pertaining to the major assignment-day schedule, course requirements, and other curricular matters. Thirdly, the school

has adjusted workloads as needed to prevent over loading individuals and enhance their effectiveness in their areas of primary responsibility. Teaching loads for the upper and middle school division heads have thus been reduced, allowing the middle school head to pick up the duties of plant management, and considerable front office and teaching staff, including full-time admissions and development officers, and other personnel have been added since the last self study. The school will continue to evaluate workloads and staff needs on an on-going basis.

Good Practice # 4: The school meets all of the PNAIS Major Standards.

4.1: Does the school fully meet all of the major standards? If not, why not?

The school currently meets all PNAIS major standards.

4.2: What overall themes emerged from the compilation of individual reports?

Since the last self study in 1998-99, St. Mary's school has experienced tremendous demographic, financial, institutional, and professional growth. When the last self study was conducted, the school's population numbered 316 students, and it was just beginning construction of phase II of the master facilities plan, the 'new' upper school building and library/media center. Subsequently, during the economic downturn of 2001, enrollment declined and the school's financial situation became somewhat precarious. Because it was overstaffed and did not plan for furnishing and operating the new building, the school suffered an operating loss and was forced to reduce staff and borrow money in order maintain operations. Facilities-maintenance, academic department, and professional development budgets were reduced to a minimum, and the school was starved for funds to upgrade its outdated technological infrastructure. At the same time, administrative staffing levels were inadequate to operate the school, which went through two heads in rapid succession leading to discontinuity in the planning process and in the daily operations of the school, and a decline in fund-raising efforts. In addition, the school lacked a departmental structure, and the faculty operated in a relative vacuum without the benefit of a sound mentoring, evaluation, and feedback system backed by an administration devoted to encouraging the development of a culture of professional growth. The school's curriculum, while rigorous, also lacked the dynamism necessary to reflect a changing world.

The school can report with considerable pride that it has overcome many of these challenges and emerged as a more viable, vibrant, and sound academic institution. The current student population is 430, a nearly 35 percent increase from 1998-99, and the school's financial situation is such that it has paid off its debt, and boosted its advancement efforts and financial aid to students to meet the projected growing enrollment of the school as determined by a professional marketing study and the trustees who judiciously updated the school's strategic and master facilities plan in 2006. The school has also improved its administrative structure, adding much needed support personnel, and it has hired a new head, the school's former academic dean, who is intimately familiar with the school, its operations, the faculty, and the community, and who has led the school in a thoughtful process of strategic institutional, financial, and professional growth. Deferring to experts, the administration has tapped the wisdom of reputable organizations such as the National Association of Independent Schools to develop innovative middle and upper school schedules. It retained a professional marketing consultant to help rebrand the school and impress upon its faculty the need for innovation that has catalyzed the

development of a host of enticing semester-long elective classes to complement its strong Advanced Placement program. It has re-conceptualized and substantially augmented its summer school program and is planning to institute a "winterim" program in the near future. It has employed Independent School Management to help it implement the widely respected Meaningful Faculty Evaluation System. And, it has begun an ambitious curriculum-mapping process that has resulted in heightened analysis of the curriculum and renewed conversations about issues of scope and sequence, horizontal integration, and the developmental appropriateness of lessons. While these developments were occurring, the school also successfully completed the College Board's Advanced Placement course audit process and registered more College Board approved Advanced Placement courses than any other school in southern Oregon. In addition, the school has developed a formal department structure and dramatically stimulated professional development by securing funds from the Friends of International Charities, who have generously supported wide-ranging faculty professional development opportunities, such as a research trip to the Middle East and significant faculty attendance at Schools Attuned: All Kinds of Minds workshops so that the school can better meet the needs of its increasingly diverse student population. And finally, the school has entered into a professional relationship with and garnered funding from Hanban, the Office of Chinese Language Council International, to begin the first Confucius Classroom in the United States dedicated to the study of Mandarin language and Chinese culture.

In response to the school's rapid growth and ambitious undertakings, the school would do well to assess thoughtfully all programs and projects to make sure its human and other resources are devoted to the core efforts that allow St. Mary's to deliver its mission.

4.3: Has the school already taken action or established plans for future action on any of these themes?

The school is continuing to make progress on all areas indicated above—curriculum mapping, continued professional development, and increasing exchanges with China--and hopes to begin construction shortly on a new practice gymnasium, weight room, and arts center which will alleviate some of the facilities constraints that the school currently experiences in these areas.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the accreditation process?**

The school benefited from the appointment of dual self-study coordinators, one a veteran of the previous self study, and the assistance of department chairs and the front office staff, who assisted tremendously in the drafting of individual reports and in the gathering of supporting documentation.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the accreditation process?**

None

Association Philosophy

This section is intended to provide the visiting team with a broad overview of the school's culture and practice while also providing a framework for the implementation of the school's program. A small committee consisting of at least one member of the school's governing body should address the questions posed in this section.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Frank Phillips (Chair), Peter Grant, Beth Geismar, Vincent Comerchero, Lisa Jones

Major Standard

The philosophy, principles, and practices of PNAIS schools are consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society; schools provide an intellectual environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject.

Good Practice #5: The school is non-discriminatory in its policies and practices.

5.1: What is the school's non-discrimination statement?

St. Mary's School is a non-discriminatory institution in its policies and practices. St. Mary's School's non-discrimination statement is as follows:

St. Mary's School admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to the rights, privileges, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual preference, national or ethnic origin, or in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and financial aid programs, or other school-administered programs.

5.2: How does the school publish its statement of non-discrimination on an annual basis?

St. Mary's School's non-discrimination statement appears on almost all school publications including admissions materials, the student handbook, the course catalog, the personnel manual, and the student-parent directory among other materials.

Good Practice #6: The school operates in a way that promotes student freedom of inquiry, diversity of viewpoints, and independent critical thinking.

6.1: In what ways does the school create an environment in which students are encouraged to express individual points of view and to examine and debate all sides of a subject?

St. Mary's School encourages individual inquiry and the free-and-open examination of topics and issues in a wide variety of ways. In designing course curricula, St. Mary's teachers, who are discipline-specific specialists in their fields, carefully select primary and secondary sources to represent a broad range of individual, philosophic, cultural, religious, and scientific perspectives. They also employ the Socratic method regularly during class discussions, a technique that encourages students to share prior knowledge, formulate their own opinions, and develop individual inductive and deductive reasoning skills. In a number of social studies and history classes, students also discuss and formally debate important issues as a means to developing critical thinking skills, and the Challenge 20/20 Global Solutions Project allows students to approach problems from a multiplicity of perspectives in collaboration with students from another culture. Frequently assigned expository and creative writing pieces also challenge students to consider multiple perspectives and to articulate and develop individual viewpoints, and individually-designed scientific experiments require students to follow the scientific procedure and make conclusions based on the evidence. During each unit, most teachers give students menus from which they can select prompts or questions to answer, and students are also given opportunities to select individual research topics, such as the Junior Project, a twelve- to twenty-page, thesis-driven research paper and panel presentation in American studies. In math classes, conversations take place as to preferred methodologies for solving problems, and students in language classes are also invited to individually select various aspects of foreign cultures to explore. Extra-curricular activities such as Junior State also provide students with opportunities to examine, discuss, and debate issues. Finally, the biennial Global Solutions Day Conference during which students are invited to select and attend small seminar classes taught by dozens of guest speakers on pressing local, national, and global problems and ways people are solving them also challenges students to become active participants in conversations about and solutions to broader issues.

6.2: In what ways does the school create environments that promote conversation about ethics, morals, and character development?

St. Mary's School strives to create environments in which conversations about ethics, morals, and character development can take place safely and constructively. In religion, social studies, and English classes teachers engage students in a process not just of knowledge and skills acquisition, but of character development as well in which student are encouraged to develop consciences consistent with high moral and ethical standards, be they religious, philosophical, or other. Conversations about ethics and moral behavior also take place in middle and upper school advisor groups, where at the middle school level students participate in a formal conflict-resolution curriculum. School retreats also provide opportunities for students to contemplate ways in which individuals can strengthen the community and define and aspire to high standards of conduct. The school also sponsors annual penny, coat, and Thanksgiving basket drives, and hosts a Mr. St. Mary's contest and pageant to raise money for a charitable cause. All high-school students also engage in one-hundred hours of community service (more if they are National Honor Society Members), as well as an annual Spring Day community-service day, and the culminating project of students' careers at St. Mary's is the Senior Project, a reflective and research-based essay and panel presentation and discussion on a social issue inspired by the student's community service project. Educational films such as the highly acclaimed PBS documentary *The Merchants of Cool*, about media manipulation of youth culture, and

presentations by guest speakers, including trauma nurses and the Medford Police about risky behavior, the director of Access Food Shelter on hunger and poverty in the Rogue Valley, and Willy Terrall, an alumnus serving in the military, about the Iraq War also prod students to think beyond the immediacy of themselves and of their responsibilities to the broader community and wider world. Finally, the school's highest graduation awards, the Christ the King and JFK Leadership awards, affirm the value that the school places on ethics and character development.

Element #6a: The school climate is characterized by mutual respect for persons and property.

6a.1: How does the school work to create mutual respect in the learning environment?

Mutual respect is a prominent theme that permeates the culture of St. Mary's School, and on-going conversations about respect involve all members of the school community throughout the year. Faculty in-services over the years have involved numerous discussions of respect and the enforcement of school rules, and Karen Borsting, a parent and teacher educator, has given a number of presentations on bullying and "queen bee" behavior among young adolescents. All students sign a pledge affirming that they have read the student handbook and agree to abide by school rules. As part of their back-to-school orientation, middle-school students also review the middle-school guidelines, and middle-school advisor groups provide an opportunity for advisors to engage students in conversations about respect as well as to formally teach students conflict-resolution strategies. The topic of respect also is discussed at high school morning meetings where students are encouraged to listen quietly to speakers, participate in efforts to improve recycling, demonstrate proper etiquette at dances, respect each others property, and generally be good members of the school community. Advisors also reinforce the theme of respect, as do teachers on a daily basis in the management of their classes and at their duty stations during breaks and lunches. The presence of all upper school students at awards ceremonies demonstrates as well the school's emphasis on respecting academic excellence, and the efforts by the school to emphasize sportsmanship and academics that culminated in the 2007 and 2008 Oregonian Cup confirm the school's success in fostering respect among community members.

Good Practice #7: The school has, through its governing body, defined what diversity means for the school.

7.1: How does the school define diversity for itself? How, when, and by whom was this definition developed?

In the summer of 2007, the head of school drafted a diversity statement that was presented to the board of trustees which discussed it. Feedback was also solicited from department chairs and the self-study coordinators before it was approved in September 2007. St. Mary's School's diversity statement is as follows:

Several criteria define diversity at St. Mary's School:

Socio-economic Diversity: By offering approximately \$500,000 in financial aid each year, St. Mary's guarantees a student body that is socio-economically diverse.

Ethnic Diversity: St. Mary's reaches out to Hispanic families, the region's largest minority. Enrollment of Hispanic students has increased markedly in the last several years, with special efforts in place to make St. Mary's affordable for qualified Hispanic students.

International Diversity: St. Mary's annually enrolls students from a number of foreign nations, including, in the past few years, Korea, Japan, Russia, Germany, Sweden, China, Italy, and Israel.

Academic Diversity: St. Mary's admits students along a continuum of academic ability. Desire to work hard at school and improve oneself outweighs raw academic talent in the admissions process.

Local-regional Diversity: St. Mary's enrolls students from a 60-mile diameter region, attracting a wide variety of students from city to suburban to rural homes.

Religious Diversity: St. Mary's accepts students of all faiths and of no professed faith, asking only that all students and families who enroll respect and learn about the Catholic values that drive St. Mary's mission.

7.2: What statements does the school make in its mission, philosophy, goals, and policies regarding diversity?

The theme of diversity is a major aspect of St. Mary's School's mission and professional excellence statements, and its portrait of a graduate.

St. Mary's School's mission statement is as follows: St. Mary's School provides a community in which intellectual curiosity and academic excellence combine with Catholic and democratic values to inspire and prepare responsible local, national, and global citizens.

The school's professional excellence statement also mentions respect for diversity as one of the faculty's core values: St. Mary's teachers inspire students to achieve their potential in thought, word, and deed. Creative and compassionate, they provide a supportive community that values excellence, integrity, and diversity. Our teachers share a visible enthusiasm for professionalism, innovation, and scholarship.

The school's portrait of a graduate further illustrates the emphasis the school places on diversity: St. Mary's School graduates students who can use critical thinking and knowledge to navigate with confidence in diverse settings and show compassion to others along the way. Our students appreciate the cultures and landscapes they encounter and lead lives guided by a true moral compass.

All of these statements are printed on all school publications including the calendar, course catalogue, student handbook, family handbook, employee manual, and *The*

Messenger, the school's alumni magazine mailed to five thousand friends, alumni, and parents of the school.

In addition, the school has a non-discrimination and toleration statement that is widely publicized and strategically posted outside the front office door:

St. Mary's School admits students of any race, color, ethnic origin or nationality to all the rights, privileges, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual preference, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, and financial aid programs, or other school-administered programs.

This is a hate-free school. We recognize the inherent goodness of all people, regardless of race, creed, color, personal opinion, sexual preference, or any of the countless other features and foibles that characterize us. We honor the humanity that joins us, and we celebrate the differences that distinguish us. As you enter and while you stay, we ask only that you abide by a single rule — one that transcends both culture and faith:

Simply treat others as you wish to be treated yourself.

Good Practice #8: The school sustains a commitment to respond to the demands of a diverse society.

8.1: In what ways does the school manifest this commitment with its various constituencies and through its practices?

St. Mary's School manifests its commitment to diversity in a number of tangible ways. In terms of financial assistance, the school distributes approximately \$500,000 per year in financial aid, a dramatic increase over the past three years, and approximately 90 percent of families receive financial assistance, a figure that is at the high end of National Association of Independent School standards for independent schools granting financial aid. The school has also made a commitment to increasing the enrollment of Latino students, and it enrolls a number of international students as well. Finally, the school has targeted financial assistance toward underserved and disadvantaged students.

In terms of its academic and co-curricular programs, the school evinces a commitment to the demands of a diverse society. Broad course offerings, the Challenge 20/20 Global Solutions Project, foreign language trips to Germany, Italy, Mexico, and China, as well as the eighth grade Manor Project, and school conversations about diversity all demonstrate the school's commitment to fostering understanding and toleration among diverse peoples and stressing our common humanity.

• **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the association's philosophy?**

St. Mary's School is geared to respond to the philosophy of the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools, and the very identity of the school is predicated on free-and-open inquiry combined with the altruistic and humanitarian values of service to those in need regardless of race, creed, or other difference.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the association's philosophy?**

None.

School Mission

This section is intended to assist the school in its review of its mission statement, philosophy, and goals. Members of the governing body, administration, faculty, staff, and other relevant constituencies should be involved in answering the questions posed below. These deliberations should be shared with the larger school community.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Jim Meyer (Chair), Catherine Dauterman, Ann Hunter, Al Hunter, Paula Stenberg, Hal Wing, Chris Johnson, Frank Phillips, Vincent Comerchero, Michelle Tresemer, Rick Jackson, Piper Galt, Lars Bowlin

Major Standard

The school has a clear mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

Good Practice #9: The school's governing body and staff understand and support the school's mission, philosophy and goals.

9.1: What are the school's mission, philosophy, and goals today?

The school's mission, philosophy, and goals are articulated in its mission statement and two purpose and outcome statements--the Definition of Professional Excellence and the Portrait of a Graduate. These statements are as follows:

Our Mission:

St. Mary's School provides a community in which intellectual curiosity and academic excellence combine with Catholic and democratic values to inspire and prepare responsible local, national, and global citizens.

Definition of Professional Excellence:

St. Mary's teachers inspire students to achieve their potential in thought, word, and deed. Creative and compassionate, they provide a supportive community that values excellence, integrity, and diversity. Our teachers share a visible enthusiasm for professionalism, innovation, and scholarship.

The Portrait of a Graduate:

St. Mary's School graduates students who can use critical thinking and knowledge to navigate with confidence in diverse settings and show compassion to others along the way. Our students appreciate the cultures and landscapes they encounter and lead lives guided by a true moral compass.

9.1.a: When were they last formulated? By whom? Through what process?

The process to develop these statements began in the fall of 2005. The head of school invited the entire faculty to participate. An *ad hoc* committee, composed of seven faculty members, three administrators, and one board member, met three times during the spring of 2006 to review an extensive marketing study which helped them to discern the core characteristics of the school. The committee then drafted thirty different mission statements and selected four finalists to present to the faculty in June of 2006. After lengthy discussion and revision of one of the options, the faculty unanimously endorsed the current statement. The board of trustees approved the current statement on July 15, 2006. The Statement of Professional Excellence and Portrait of a Graduate were developed by *ad hoc* faculty committees and unanimously endorsed by the full faculty.

9.1.b: If changes were made, what were they and what brought about these changes?

The changes to the mission statement were prompted in part by an extensive marketing study conducted in the fall of 2005. At the time, the existing mission statement had been in place for over ten years, did not fully or accurately reflect the current identity of the school, and was not effective in enhancing the school's identity in the community. Revision of the mission statement and development of the Definition of Professional Excellence and Portrait of a Graduate were identified as first-tier strategic goals in the school's current strategic plan.

9.1.c: What provision is made for regular review and revision?

The mission statement and purpose and outcome statements will be formally reviewed every ten years.

9.2: Are there parts of the mission statement about which there is a lack of consensus on meaning or interpretation? If so, please explain.

No.

Good Practice #10: The school effectively communicates the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

10.1: In what ways does the school communicate its school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals?

The mission statement, definition of professional excellence are printed prominently in every formal external publication, including the annual report, quarterly magazine, course catalog, student handbook, graduation programs, and calendar. The mission statement is also shown on the front page of the school website and on application materials. All three statements are also included in formal internal publications such as the employee handbook.

Good Practice #11: The school evidences in its program(s) and operations the school's mission statement, philosophy, and goals, all of which are appropriate to meet the needs of the students it serves.

11.1: The head of the school is required to provide a written statement reflecting how the mission and philosophy are interpreted including the ways in which the mission is consistent with a free, open, humane, and diverse society. He or she should show how the mission is being supported in the policies, procedures, and objectives of the school. In doing this, the head should give examples and indicate how various programs and methods reflect the school's mission.

Our Mission

St. Mary's School provides a community in which intellectual curiosity and academic excellence combine with Catholic and democratic values to inspire and prepare responsible local, national, and global citizens.

As evident throughout this report, the St. Mary's mission and the PNAIS principle of a school promoting "a free, open, humane, and diverse society" are congruent. First, what is most evident to parents, students, and teachers, is that the school's curriculum and course offerings from grade six through the twelve celebrate diversity and promote free thought, compassion, and humanitarian concerns. English literature and history textbooks are purposely chosen with the school's mission in mind. Students read works of acknowledged human excellence, discussing and writing about a range of cultures, human experiences, political systems, and the perspectives of various social classes and citizenries from the beginning of recorded history and from all over the planet. The science curriculum, while providing students the scientific knowledge they need as educated citizens, also engages them in discussions of environmental issues and the effects of science and technology upon society. Foreign language classes teach an appreciation of their various cultures. Robust international trips and exchange programs acquaint students with the peoples whose languages they study. As an independent Catholic school, St. Mary's is true to its Catholic identity while being open minded and inclusive of families of all religions as well as "the unchurched." That Catholics are a minority, roughly one-third of the school's population, bears this out. On the sophomore world religions trip to San Francisco, for example, students attend services at Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Episcopalian, Russian Orthodox, and other denominational worship centers and attend meetings with the rabbis, swamis, and ministers of these establishments. Required community service, culminating in a senior project reflecting on students' service work, further supports the school's mission and PNAIS principles: rolling up their sleeves and addressing the community's needs imbues students with a sense of empathy and cooperation and almost always engages them with new classes of people and problems. Another obvious example of St. Mary's commitment to these principles are our biennial special assemblies which stop school for an entire day and bring in a range of special guest speakers to host seminars on compelling social issues. The most recent example of this was our Global Solutions Day in February of 2007 in which over fifty expert presenters engaged students in seminars ranging from water quality concerns to environmentally-friendly building techniques to Peace Corps experiences to universal health care and numerous other issues. Another programmatic feature, the school's no-cut policy in athletics, assures that the entire student body has access to interscholastic sports teams, eliminating the cliques and exclusivity that often come with traditional varsity athletics.

The St. Mary's School Board of Trustees, itself a diverse body, through an active policy of generous financial aid, also seeks to build as diverse a student body as possible, both socio-economically and

ethnically, given Medford's demographics. Special scholarships exist for our region's largest minority, Hispanic students. Besides setting aside financial aid funds in the general operating budget for minority students, the board has also secured generous foundation funding of full scholarships for Hispanic students.

Teacher evaluation methods at St. Mary's also align our mission with PNAIS principles. Employing ISM's Meaningful Faculty Evaluation system, teachers pursue professional development objectives that enrich their teaching, heighten their job satisfaction, and keep the intellectual ferment of St. Mary's bubbling. In essence, teachers' intellectual engagement in the life of the school is the dominant criterion on which their evaluations are based.

The previous examples illustrate the ways in which the St. Mary's mission and the PNAIS principle of a school promoting "a free, open, humane, and diverse society" are consistent. The body of this report contains numerous other examples. In short, however, the Catholic identity of the school manifests itself in two traditions. The first is a rigorous, wide-ranging intellectual examination of the human condition. This attitude ensures free-and-open inquiry and the thoughtful consideration of multiple perspectives. The second is the Catholic tradition of good works. This ensures that our school demonstrates the empathy and concern that produces humane citizens who understand social diversity.

11.2: In what ways does the school assess the effectiveness of the ways in which the mission, philosophy, and goals are evidenced in the school program(s) and operations?

The effectiveness of St. Mary's School's mission, definition of professional excellence, and portrait of a graduate are assessed in both formal and informal ways. Formally, St. Mary's School's high mean Scholastic Aptitude Test scores that are well above the state and national averages, its significant number of National Merit Scholars and National Merit Semi-Finalists, the large pool of students who take and successfully pass College Board Advanced Placement examinations, and the considerable population who achieve Advanced Placement Scholar status indicate that the school is preparing students well. In addition, St. Mary's School's high graduation and extraordinary college acceptance and graduation rates as well as the tremendous caliber of higher educational institutions St. Mary's students attend along with the generous financial assistance packages they receive, further underscores the success of the school's efforts to help students achieve their potentials. Informally, the rich and varied curriculum that St. Mary's School offers and the significant choice it gives students to pursue areas of interest as well as the surging enrollment in new elective offerings reveals the school's success in inspiring students by democratically offering them choices as to their courses of study. The school's vibrant community service program—the requirement that students perform 100 hours of community service prior to graduation, annual Spring Day community service days where students volunteer for charitable causes throughout the community, the student body's fundraising efforts that garner thousands of dollars for charitable causes per year, and students' thoughtful capstone Senior Projects that reveal the intrinsic value students place in community service—all demonstrate the success of the school's mission of combining Catholic and democratic values and its adept fusing of the doctrine of good works with the democratic ideal of

the responsibility of all citizens for maintaining the well being of the community at large and the common good.

In addition, the school's support for faculty innovation and development in the MFE program, its beginning efforts to implement the All Kinds of Minds: Schools Attuned program, and the administration's commitment to a faculty- and student-centered organizational model further reflect the congruence between the school's mission and practice and its successful efforts to help stimulate innovation and creativity among its teachers for the purpose of inspiring students.

Finally, the anecdotal reports of the meaningful endeavors of St. Mary's alumni and their generous support of the school also confirm the school's success in achieving its mission.

11.3: What recommendations are made to give the mission and philosophy a more vital and central role in the life of the school?

None.

11.4: To the extent that any division of the school has an individual philosophy or goals, that division will provide a written statement of its individual philosophy and its relation to the school's mission, operational procedures, policies, programs, and objectives.

Not applicable.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the school's mission?**

St. Mary's School has a clear and lofty mission that the faculty, staff, trustees, and members of the administration embrace and which the school program is designed to achieve.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the school's mission?**

None.

Institutional Leadership

Independence for PNAIS schools means that the school has institutional leadership in place that develops and promotes the school mission and vision consistent with the principles of PNAIS and protects the school's implementation of that mission and vision from undue interference and inappropriate influence and control from stakeholders within the school as well as from third parties outside of the school.

This section is intended for all institutional leaders who have substantial influence over the future of the school and is designed to assist these individuals in reflecting upon the effectiveness of the school's leadership. Responses should clearly illustrate the ways in which this leadership impacts the viability and sustainability of the institution. A school's Institutional Leadership should address at least two separate functions: an oversight and governance function, which will be referred to as being discharged by the governing body throughout this document, and the executive function providing leadership of the day-to-day management of the school. This executive function will be referred to as being discharged by the Head of School throughout this document. A committee made up of at least the head of the governing body, the Head of School, and some members of the governing body should complete the questions within this section.

During the accreditation visit, the head of the governing body or owner and as many officers of the school's governing body as possible should be available to meet privately with the visiting team chair and/or institutional leadership evaluator to discuss the structural elements of the governing body that both ensure a system of checks and balances and provide for strategic decision-making. The Head of School should be available to meet privately with these individuals as well. It is the school's responsibility to show convincingly that the leadership structure and operations meet the following Major Standard, Good Practices and Elements.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Catherine Dauterman (Chair), Frank Phillips, Chuck Dibb, Doug Irvine, Harry Piper, Nancy Gross

Major Standard

The school's institutional leadership operates with a structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and of day-to-day management. The structure provides for oversight and planning adequate to sustain the school's mission and vision and for institutional decision-making based upon a system of checks and balances that assures the school's long-term viability.

Good Practice #12: The school has established itself as an independent school by operating with an institutional leadership structure that includes at least two separate entities which carry out the separate functions of governance and day-to-day management.

12.1: Who has legal authority over the school?

The board of trustees has legal authority over the school.

12.2: Describe the school's governance structure.

The board of trustees is responsible for safeguarding the mission of the school and ensuring the financial well being of the school. The board selects, supports, and evaluates the head of school. The head of school advances the board's strategic plan and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

12.3: Describe any boards, groups, individuals, or other entities that have a substantial influence over the school. Discuss the working relationship between these entities and the school, any influence exercised by these entities over the management of resources, the nature of any rights or powers that these entities hold, and the circumstances under which those rights and powers may be exercised.

The Archdiocese of Portland has limited authority over the school in matters of faith and morals and exercises supervision over the Catholicity and religious education program of the school. The land and buildings occupied by the school are owned by Sacred Heart Parish, with whom the school has a long-term lease.

Element #12a: The school is legally incorporated.

12a.1: Have the school's articles of incorporation been changed since the last visit (for accredited schools) or in the last eight years (for schools going through their first visit)? If so, what changes were made and why?

No.

Good Practice #13: The school has defined the roles and responsibilities of its governing body.

13.1: What are the basic roles and responsibilities of the school's governing body?

The responsibilities of the board of trustees are both managerial and philosophical. Globally, they include the execution of the school's mission, as well as the fiduciary duties of seeing that the mission is carried out with fiscal prudence and in compliance with relevant laws.

13.2: What are the committees, task forces, and *ad hoc* committees of the school's governing body and what is the purpose of each committee, task force, and *ad hoc* committee?

The standing committees are the development committee, the finance committee, and the committee on trustees. The development committee is responsible for execution of the strategic plan and annual school fund raising as outlined in the bylaws. The finance committee is in charge of the development and execution of a fiscally responsible budget in accordance with the mission of the school, as well as related issues including audits, employee-benefit plans and insurance. The committee on trustees is responsible for the identification and recruitment of future trustees of St. Mary's School in order to assure a proper spectrum of expertise on the

board, as well as for ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the board, the board chair, and individual trustees. There are no current *ad hoc* committees at St. Mary's School.

13.3: What are the governing body goals for the current year and how were they developed?

The school held a retreat in 2005 composed of the board and the school administration, from which the current strategic plan was developed. The goals for the current year are in compliance with the timeline developed in conjunction with the strategic plan. Please refer to the strategic plan in the supporting documents section at the end of the self study for a complete view of the governing body's strategic goals for the coming year.

13.4: How frequently does the school's governing body meet? For how long?

The board of trustees meets monthly for 60-120 minutes.

Element #13a: The school's governing body is functioning in accordance with its bylaws.

13a.1: Are there ways in which the governing body operates in a manner inconsistent with its bylaws? If so, describe.

No.

13a.2: When were the bylaws last reviewed and by whom?

The bylaws were last revised in January 2004, by the board of trustees.

13a.3: What substantive changes were made and why?

No substantive changes were made, as the bylaws were deemed sufficient for the effective functioning of the board.

Element #13b: The governing body has a conflict of interest policy.

13b.1: What is the governing body's conflict of interest policy? If possible, provide a recent example of how it was utilized.

A written conflict of interest policy, available upon request, was developed by the board in the spring of 2008 and adopted at its August 2008 meeting. Even prior to the adoption of this written policy, however, there was a recent example, in the winter of 2006, of a conflict of interest managed by the *sua sponte* recusal of a board member: a board member (whose term has since ended) recused himself from discussions of a purchase that the school was considering because he recognized that he was affiliated with the organization with which the school was entering negotiations.

13b.2: Please describe any potential conflicts of interest among members of the school's governing body (familial, financial, professional, and employment-related relationships) and describe how potential conflicts of interest are managed.

Conflicts of interest are self identified, and management of the potential conflict from that point is at the discretion of the board president or his/her designee.

13b.3: If there are voting members of the governing body not chosen by the school's governing body, describe how potential conflicts of interest are managed.

The Pastor Representative of the Southern Vicariate has an *ex officio* voting position on the board of trustees. He has the same responsibilities of self identification of potential conflicts of interest as do all other trustees. Once a conflict is identified, it is managed at the discretion of the board president or his/her designee.

Element #13c: Policies and procedures are in place to provide for continuity of leadership of the governing body.

13c.1: How is this leadership identified, selected, and oriented?

Potential board-of-trustee candidates are identified by the school administration and the current board of trustees. The board discusses and selects potential candidates, and the administration, board delegates, and their designees orient them.

13c.2: What are the current terms for governing body leadership?

Current terms for governing body leadership are three years and renewable.

Good Practice #14: The school's governing body is of appropriate size and composition to meet its roles and responsibilities and the needs of the school.

Element #14a: The school's governing body has policies and procedures in place for establishing its membership.

14a.1: Describe the target size and composition for the school's governing body and give the rationale for each.

The St. Mary's Board of Trustees may, per its bylaws, have from seven to seventeen members. It currently has sixteen and will add a seventeenth in September. Board members bring experience in education, finances, marketing, religion and religious instruction, construction, and health care, among other skills. The board has five standing committees: finance, trustees, executive, advancement (development), and admissions and marketing. The decision to appoint the maximum number of trustees to the board is purposeful: the school and the region have experienced substantial growth. A number of talented individuals have become part of the St. Mary's community, and their services as trustees help advance the school's mission. The size and composition of the board therefore are suited to the tasks at hand and the execution of the school's mission.

14a.2: Is the current makeup of the school's governing body adequate to meet the goals of the school's governing body? If not, what are the Board's plans to reach the target size and composition?

As in 14a.1 above, the St. Mary's Board of Trustees has a range of talents and skills adequate to meet its goals. The committee on trustees also maintains a list of desirable candidates to fill positions as terms come up. Careful consideration is given to recruiting individuals whose skill sets align well with the school's mission and goals.

14a.3: What qualities or skills does the school's governing body seek in its members?

The board seeks individuals who are of course committed to the school's mission, have the skills and knowledge both to safeguard the school and to materially advance it as it grows along with the region, and who can engage in thoughtful and civil discussions of governance and strategic planning issues. As noted above, skills in finance, construction, education, marketing, and religious instruction are of particular interest.

Good Practice #15: The school's institutional leadership provides a balance of authority between the governing body and Head of School.

15.1: Describe the balance of authority between the governing body and the Head of School and provide a recent illustration of how this balance works in practice.

The board of trustees is responsible for safeguarding the mission of the school and ensuring the school's financial well being. The board selects, supports, and evaluates the head, who advances the board's strategic plan and is responsible for the school's day-to-day operations. The head is also a voting member of the board.

One recent example of this balance of authority occurred at the September 18, 2007 board meeting. The head of school suggested the possibility of expanding the summer school program. After discussion regarding whether this served the mission of the school and fit in with the strategic and financial plans, the board voted to approve expanding the summer program.

15.2: If the organization is part of a larger corporate structure, what is the nature of the Head of School's involvement in its decision-making process?

Not applicable.

Good Practice #16: The Head of School and the school's governing body have developed an effective working relationship.

16.1: Describe the working relationship between the school's governing body and the Head of School.

The board of trustees and the head of school meet monthly. At every meeting, the head of school gives a head's report. In between meetings, the head of school often uses e-mail to update the board.

16.2: Describe the working relationship between the Head of School and the leader of the school's governing body. How often do they meet? What kinds of issues are discussed?

The head of school and board chairs meet every few weeks and e-mail each other frequently. They discuss issues that need to be addressed at upcoming board meetings and the general status of the school.

16.3: Describe how the school's governing body communicates its expectations of the Head of School regarding school operations and program.

The board communicates its expectations to the head of school in several ways. Feedback is given regarding the head's report at each board meeting. At a meeting with the board chairs, the head's annual goals are discussed. The board chairs evaluate the head at an additional annual meeting.

16.4: How are any concerns of the school's governing body communicated to the Head of School?

Concerns of the board are communicated to the head by telephone, email, direct feedback at monthly meetings, and by written annual evaluation.

Good Practice #17: The Head of School is responsible for operating the school in accordance with the authority conferred by the governing body.

17.1: What are the basic roles and responsibilities of the Head of School?

As stated contractually, the head of school is responsible for administering school policies; hiring and evaluating all school employees; overseeing the school's external operations including admissions, recruitment, and advancement; managing the school's financial operations; maintaining the school's physical plant, facilities, buildings, and grounds; overseeing the school's academic and co-curricular program; and maintaining student and employee discipline.

17.2: Describe how the Head of School guides and supports the work of the school's governing body.

The head of school collaborates with the board and key personnel on the formation of the school's strategic plan, which establishes the heads strategic priorities. The head reports to the board at each meeting the steps being taken to achieve the board's strategic vision. If carrying out strategic plan goals calls for the participation of trustees and committees, the head notifies the board of such needs and the chairs ensure that they are carried out.

17.3: Describe how the Head of School guides and supports the administrative work of the school.

The head of school meets annually with key administrative personnel to draft an administrative strategic plan, which more precisely articulates the administrative goals, objectives and

implementation steps of the overall strategic plan, and which guides the administration's weekly meetings. The head also supervises the administrative team as it manages the school's operations, supports his administrators in developing meaningful professional development opportunities and improvement plans, which he reviews regularly

17.4: Describe how the Head of School guides and supports the educational work of the school.

The school's strategic plan sets broad goals for the educational work of the school. The head of school and his administrative team engage in on-going evaluation of teachers and monitors the mission-appropriateness of the school's educational program. The head of school discusses course offerings and content with the teachers, department chairs, and administrators, reviews standardized testing results that are pertinent to curricular goals, and ultimately decides on course offerings each year. The head of school is also responsible for ensuring that teachers pursue ongoing professional development.

17.5: What are the Head of School's goals for the current year and describe the process by which they were developed?

The goals for the 2007-2008 school year stem from the school's overall strategic plan and were approved in consultation with the chair of the St. Mary's Board of Trustees. These goals focus on four major areas: the PNAIS self study, faculty professional development, the strategic marketing plan, and the implementation of the Senior Systems program.

PNAIS self-study: oversight of self-study process, allocation of resources thereto, final publication thereof.

Foster growth of a faculty culture based on professional development, continuation of MFE and allocation of resources to teachers for professional development.

Strategic Marketing Plan: continue to act on recommendations and further develop action plan from 2005 Ian Symmonds' study

Senior Systems Implementation: on-line grading, billing, continued migration and cleaning up of old database, and the rapid reorganization of the development database.

Good Practice #18: The school has a strategic plan covering a three to five year period that is approved by the governing body.

18.1: When did the school's governing body approve the current strategic plan? Outline the process by which it was developed.

The school approved the current strategic plan in April of 2006 following a two-day retreat facilitated by Simon Jeynes and Paula Schwartz of Independent School Management. The strategic planning session involved the entire school board, school administrators, the director of academic affairs, the director of admissions, and the director of development.

18.2: Describe the process by which the school's governing body assesses progress on the strategic plan?

First, the annual agenda for board meetings is based upon the school's strategic plan. Each board meeting, therefore, is an active assessment of progress on the strategic plan. Second, an *ad hoc* committee of trustees and administrators review the plan annually, revise and expand it as necessary, and present the results to the board for approval.

18.3: Describe any emerging issues not addressed in the strategic plan that may affect the future of the school and the plans to address these issues.

Not applicable.

Good Practice #19: The school's institutional leadership has processes to assess and improve the effectiveness of school's governing body and of the Head of School

Element #19a: The governing body has procedures for its self-evaluation.

19a.1: Describe the process by which the school's governing body evaluates itself.

The board conducts a self-evaluation each year. These evaluations are completed and tabulated on-line, and the results are presented to the board by the board chair and the committee on trustees.

19a.2: How often does this evaluation take place?

The self-evaluation takes place annually.

19a.3: How are the results of the evaluation used?

The results are presented to the board, and the board then discusses its strengths and weaknesses. The board also determines ways to address perceived weaknesses, either by changing procedures or by altering or assigning tasks to specific committees.

19a.4: Describe a recent change or action that came about as a result of this self-evaluation?

The board of trustees has incorporated a board education item into each meeting agenda to address issues that have been raised in the self evaluation; thus far, these issues have included a review of board and committee responsibilities and discussions about how the board interacts and communicates with the school community.

Element #19b: The school's governing body keeps records of its meetings, committees and policies and communicates its decisions appropriately, while keeping its deliberations confidential.

19b.1: Provide an overview of the ways in which the school’s governing body maintains adequate records of its meetings and the meetings of its committees. (See Documents To Be Provided at the end of this section)

Minutes are taken at each board meeting. After each meeting, the minutes are distributed to and reviewed by every board member. Any necessary corrections are made, and the minutes and any corrections are approved at the subsequent meeting.

19b.2: What expectations does the school’s governing body have about the confidentiality of its deliberations?

Board members expect and respect complete confidentiality in all meetings. Before topics or decisions are shared with another constituency or with the school community at large, the board discusses and agrees on what should be made public, how, and to whom.

19b.3: In what way does the school’s governing body communicate its role, responsibilities, and actions to the school community?

The board publishes a regular column in the school’s newsletter, *The Messenger*, and it is developing a board section of the school’s website where it will post regular updates of its work and public aspects of its meetings. The board chair will also make presentations to the school community as needed; in 2006-2007, she presented an analysis of the school’s tuition increase to a group of concerned parents to help them understand why the increase was necessary. This presentation was repeated in 2008 by the board’s finance chair.

Element #19c: The school’s governing body has policies and procedures in place for orienting and educating its members.

19c.1: How are members of the school’s governing body oriented to the school and educated about their responsibilities and the ethics of trusteeship?

The committee on trustees orients each new board member. New board members are given copies of our by-laws, board policies, and committee lists, and each new board member also receives his or her own copy of the *NAIS Trustee Handbook*. In addition, the board has regular “Board Education” topics on the monthly agendas, and the board reviews trustee roles and responsibilities each fall.

19c.2: What provisions are made for keeping members of the school’s governing body abreast of: how the program is fulfilling the philosophy and mission of the school, issues of management of the school, critical issues facing the school, and concerns in the broad field of education?

Sometimes the “Board Education” items on the meeting agenda address issues of school management and broad educational issues. Every month, the head of school presents a report, which typically addresses most of these issues. Regular review of the board’s strategic plan also helps the board to keep abreast of mission-critical tasks. When the need arises, the head may also e-mail the board regarding staffing or other issues that arise between meetings.

Element #19d: The governing body has procedures for the evaluation for the Head of School.

19d.1: Describe the process by which the Head of school is evaluated.

Every year, the head writes a self-evaluation that includes both an evaluation of his work thus far and a plan and list of goals for the coming year. The head reviews this self-evaluation with the board chair, who adds comments, and then the results are presented to the board.

19d.2: How often does this evaluation take place?

The head is evaluated annually.

19d.3: How are the results of the evaluation used?

At the end of the school year, the head reviews his list of goals, evaluates his progress, and discusses the year's work with the board chair. The board chair then adds her own comments, and the final results of the self-evaluation are presented to the board. The board asks questions, and if any issues come up, the board helps the head find solutions.

19d.4: Describe a recent change or action that came about as a result of this evaluation?

The evaluation process revealed that the head of school had too many daily management responsibilities to allow him to work as effectively as he might, and so we hired a finance officer and lightened the teaching loads of our middle school head and upper school head so that they could assist the head in pursuing mission-appropriate changes, and managing the school's increasing enrollment.

19d.5: Describe the process for the periodic review of the Head of School's contract and compensation?

Every year, the board meets in executive session to discuss the head's performance, vote on contract renewal, and determine any salary increase. The finance committee looks at the compensation for heads of schools of a similar size, type, and location in order to benchmark the head's compensation.

Element #19e: The Head of School engages in ongoing professional development.

19e.1: What expectations and provisions are there for the ongoing professional development of the Head of School?

The head goes to a variety of meetings and workshops every year. He attends numerous NAIS, PNAIS, Archdiocesan, and other professional meetings and conferences. In 2006-2007, for example, he attended a week-long Independent School Management (ISM) scheduling workshop in order to garner ideas for improving the school's schedule. The head then brings back what he

learns at these conferences and shares his new insights with teachers, administrators, and board members.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the area of institutional leadership?**

In terms of institutional leadership, the school's greatest strengths are a clear and actively pursued strategic plan and active, well-structured committees. The school's strategic plan was thoughtfully and systematically formulated during the school's strategic planning retreat in 2006, and the board regularly revisits and revises it to ensure that the board is following it assiduously and that the plan in fact reflects an up-to-date assessment of the school's needs. At present, the board consists of three standing committees dealing with development, trustees, and finance and periodically assembles *ad hoc* committees to address particular needs. Each committee meets regularly and carries out its duties effectively. The strategic plan focuses the work of the various committees and ensures that they complete their tasks efficiently. Committees inform the board of their progress and of any issues that arise.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of institutional leadership?**

The board is working hard to make its membership more diverse. At present, nearly every board member is a parent (the exceptions being one future parent and two representatives from the Church). The board also lacks some ethnic/cultural diversity, but it is generally reflective of the Rogue Valley population, and, while the board seeks to mitigate the situation as much as possible, its choices are nevertheless limited. The committee on trustees seeks to recruit community leaders who do not necessarily have strong ties to the school, but so far, its efforts have been unsuccessful. The board hopes that, as St. Mary's continues to reach out and become a more visible presence in the valley, interest among community leaders in the school and its development will grow.

Finance

This section is intended to assist the school in the review of its financial structure and long term sustainability. The committee should include at least one member of the governing body and other individuals working outside the business office.

Who was responsible for this section? Wayne Healy (Chair), Liebe Roth, Rick Jackson, Alastair Hunter, Susan Cain

Major Standard

The school's financial operations, resources and planning are adequate to support the school's mission and vision and to sustain the school's long-term viability and stability.

Good Practice #20: The school has a solid financial base to ensure the school's long-term viability and stability.

Element #20a: The school has adequate annual financial resources to sustain the school's program.

20a.1: Discuss the adequacy of the school's finances to support the mission of the school.

St. Mary's School is in sound financial condition. The school's current revenue flow is able to sustain the school's programs and mission goals. Over the last three years, the school has continued to maintain and improve the amount of tuition paid as a percent of its hard costs and achieved a 91.5 percent tuition-hard cost ratio during the 2006-07 year. The short fall is covered by our development department.

20a.2: Describe the major non-tuition revenue streams for the school and include the percentage each represents of the total revenue income.

The major non-tuition revenue streams as a percentage of total revenue are contributions (1.6 percent), the annual fund (9.0 percent), and the auction (6.1 percent).

20a.3: What monies are set aside in a reserve fund for (a) emergencies (b) physical plant replacement?

St. Mary's covers emergencies as they arise. The buildings are leased from the Archdiocese, and a systematic physical plant replacement plan is not yet in place. The school currently operates two well maintained but aged boilers that heat the middle school and gym and expects to replace them when they fail.

20a.4: What is the school's policy for investment of endowment and surplus cash? Who developed it? How is it implemented and monitored?

The St. Mary's Community Foundation, a separate 501 (c) (3) with a separate, seven-member board of directors that includes two trustees from the St. Mary's school board, the head of school, and the director of development, functions as the school's endowment fund. Restricted and unrestricted funds within this foundation are invested in accordance with a 70/30 policy, i.e., 70 percent of the funds are invested in equity accounts and 30 percent in fixed income accounts. The St. Mary's Community Foundation does not actively solicit gifts, but does accept gifts specifically made to it.

20a.5: Identify any current financial risks that may affect the school's viability within the next three to five years. If such risks exist, what are the plans to address each element of risk?

The single largest risk to the school's viability within the next three to five years is a decline (while not projected) in enrollment. In this event, the school would reduce the number of personnel in order to balance the budget. However, the school's comprehensive marketing study projects healthy enrollments.

Element #20b: The school forthrightly and regularly communicates its financial status.

20b.1: In what ways does the school communicate its financial status with the governing body? with employees? With parents? With donors?

The finance committee presents a full financial report quarterly to the board of trustees during regularly scheduled meetings. The head of school goes over the school's balance sheet, actual previous year's budget, and the current year's working budget with the school's employees every year at August in-service. In the interests of transparency, each year the chair of the finance committee of the board of trustees holds a forum on the financial health of school. The forum is well advertised to all families via email and the school's website calendar, and participants are encouraged to ask questions. Finally, the school's financial status is revealed in broad strokes to donors in the school's annual report.

Good Practice #21: The school has policies and follows practices sufficient for the school's governing body to provide oversight and guidance regarding financial operations and risk management.

21.1: Describe the composition of the group (for example: finance committee) that oversees the school's financial management. In what ways are group members familiar with accounting procedures and internal controls related to school finance?

The finance committee currently has five members: the head of school, the school's business officer, the board chair, and two trustees. One of the trustees is a certified public accountant with decades of experience at KPMG, an audit and tax advisory consulting firm, who is currently a professor of accounting at the local university; the other is the chief financial officer of a large business. Both have served in this financial capacity on numerous other non-profit boards and are well-versed in non-profit accounting procedures. The board plans to appoint a new trustee who is also the chief financial officer of a very large corporation.

Element #21a: The school has a budgeting process that is approved and monitored by the school's governing body.

21a.1: Describe the procedures for the development and monitoring of the budget.

The budget is developed by the head of school and the business manager with input from the admissions director and department heads. A preliminary budget is prepared each fall for presentation to the finance committee. The finance committee reviews and adjusts this budget in concert with the head of school and business manager. This working budget for the coming school year is presented and explained to the full board of trustees and approved in December at which time tuition for the coming school year is set. When opening day enrollment for the school is final, adjustments to this working budget are made to reflect actual enrollment and tuition revenue, and the final school year's operating budget is presented to and approved at the full board of trustees meeting in September. Additionally, the business manager generates monthly revenue/expense reports, which are reviewed by the finance committee and the head of school. Regular quarterly reports of the finance committee to the full school board insure constant attention to the school's budget and financial condition.

21.2: Describe the relationship between those administratively responsible for financial management and those exercising governance responsibility.

The head of school is hired by the board of trustees. This person serves as the chief administrator of the school and as such has full responsibility for all the school operations and activities. The head of school hires the appropriate personnel to ensure responsible day-to-day financial management. Corporate responsibility resides with the board of trustees, who elect and supervise the corporate officers.

21.3: Describe the role of the finance committee of the school's governing body and how it relates to the operation of the school. OR Describe the relationship between the owners of the school and any staff members or consultants responsible for the school's financial management.

Budgeting, cash management, and monitoring of tuition contracts are handled by administrative personnel. The budget is created by the head of school, business services, and business manager and approved by the finance committee for presentation to the full board. The finance committee is not involved in day-to-day financial operation. It does, however, work closely with the head of school on all matters pertaining to the overall financial health of the school.

21.4: Is the insurance coverage (risk management) of the school reviewed for adequacy by the school's governing body on a periodic basis?

Annually the school's casualty insurance is reviewed by the head of school, business manager, and insurance agent to ensure adequate coverage is maintained.

21.5: What are the strengths of the financial management of the school?

The financial management's strengths include checks-and-balances, excellent policies and procedures, the experience and longevity of the employees responsible for budgeting and accounting, and the expertise of the trustees serving on the finance committee. The school has received a clean audit for the past several years with praise from the firm for our internal controls and the clarity and accuracy of our records. The business manager has six years of experience in her current position and has held various other positions in her more than seventeen years at St. Mary's including board of trustees member, co-director of development, member of the board of directors of the St. Mary's Community Foundation, and school board member at Sacred Heart Catholic School, the pre-K through grade 8 "feeder" school for St. Mary's. The head of school is in his twentieth year of employment at St. Mary's, with almost all of those years involving administrative duties. The head of school also has completed course work in accounting and economics and, before his current career, was a manager in a manufacturing company in a role that demanded financial acumen. The trustees serving on the finance committee as a result bring decades of CFO and CPA experience to their committee work and oversight of the school's financial management.

Element #21a: The school has a budgeting process that is approved and monitored by the school's governing body.

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Good Practice #22: The school has a three to five year long-range financial plan approved by the governing body that supports the school's strategic plan.

22.1: Describe how the most recent long-range financial plan was developed.

In 2006, a six-year, strategic financial plan, found in the finance documents section at the end of the self study, was developed with the help of ISM during a strategic and development planning session held on April 7-11, 2006. As the board revises the school's overall strategic plan, any action items that require funding are reflected by adjustments to the school's strategic financial plan. The strategic financial plan was last adjusted in the summer of 2008 and changes to it approved by the full school board in its August 2008 meeting.

22.2: Describe the process by which the school assesses progress on the long-range financial plan.

The primary marker is the school's percent of hard cost to total tuition collected. The school's goal is to be above 94 percent at the end of the sixth year of the plan. Progress is also revealed by the completion of strategic plan items that have costs assigned to them. The finance committee routinely revisits the strategic financial plan, especially as actual budget figures become available at the close of each fiscal year.

Good Practice #23: The school completes a full independent financial audit for the fiscal year prior to the accreditation evaluation.

(Note: Should this audit not be available for the visiting team, the previous year's full financial audit or financial review may be reviewed during the visit. However, the school will not be given unconditional accreditation until the full financial audit for the fiscal year prior to the accreditation evaluation and the school's response to the issues raised in the management letter are reviewed and approved by the team.)

23.1: Describe the school's audit and financial review schedule and the rationale for this schedule.

Every year the school reviews its financial status and receives a complete financial audit. The process begins shortly after the fiscal year closes on June 30. The head of school, business manager, and the finance committee chair then review the books. By the end of June, the chair of the board of trustees signs an engagement letter for the past year's Form 5500 and the financial audit. The audit commences during the first week of August and lasts one to two weeks.

23.2: How is the school's auditor chosen? Who approves the engagement of the auditing firm?

The board of trustees selects, approves, and engages the auditing firm.

23.3: To whom are the findings of the audit or financial review presented?

The findings of the audit are presented in draft form to the head of school, business manager, and the finance committee for review. After approval is received, the finance committee presents the final audit to the board of trustees.

23.4: If the school received a management letter, what steps have been taken to address the recommendations outlined in the management letter?

The school did receive a management letter. The only recommendation made in the management letter concerned cash balances in excess of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation levels. This situation has been resolved by purchasing additional deposit insurance that allows St. Mary's cash deposits to be fully insured.

Good Practice #24: Auxiliary services are appropriately supervised, funded, and mission appropriate.

24.1: Describe how the school decides which auxiliary services are offered?

St. Mary's currently offers two auxiliary services: summer reading book sales and summer programs. The summer reading book sales program allows St. Mary's to sell summer reading texts as a service to our families and to ensure that students have ready access to assigned texts. The faculty uses these texts to jump start the school year at the end of summer when school resumes. Sales of textbooks for the academic year have been outsourced to ClassBook.com

St. Mary's summer school programs, open to all comers, serve the local community by providing enrichment classes, college-preparatory classes, and sports camps to students from Grades 4-12. Summer school offerings are all in keeping with the school's mission and taught almost exclusively by full-time teachers and coaches employed during the normal school year.

24.2: Describe the purposes and objectives of each auxiliary service (transportation, food service, bookstore, extended day, summer program, etc.) and how each service fits into the mission of the school.

St. Mary's currently offers two auxiliary services: textbook sales and summer programs. The textbook sales program allows St. Mary's to sell summer reading texts as a service to our families and to ensure that students have ready access to assigned texts. The faculty uses these texts to jump start the school year at the end of summer when school resumes. Sales of textbooks for the academic year have been outsourced to ClassBook.com

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24.3: How are the auxiliary services staffed and funded?

No additional staffing is required for summer reading book sales. The process is organized and operated by the school's librarian and is part of her annual job expectations.

The school's Summer Quest program is directed by a full-time teacher who is paid a stipend to organize and oversee the program. Instructors are paid at standard rates. The school realizes a small profit on the program overall.

24.4: Discuss the impact on the operating budget of each of these services.

The minimal labor cost of the summer reading book sales program, since it is part of the librarian's expected range of duties, is absorbed as part of the librarian's regular salary. The summer school program has generated additional revenue for the school, but not a substantial amount.

24.5: How does the school evaluate whether or not an auxiliary service is meeting its purpose and objective?

The head of school in consultation with the management team and summer school director evaluates whether the school's auxiliary services are meeting their purposes and objectives.

24.6: What are the major strengths of the auxiliary services as they stand?

The major strength of the summer reading book sales program is that it allows parents to conveniently purchase books in a bundle for their students. The major strength of the Summer Quest program is that it exposes prospective students to St. Mary's School and provides enticing enrichment and academic classes.

24.7: What recommendations does the school make in this area?

The school seeks to expand the Summer Quest program in terms of enrollment and courses offered and so that it eventually generates more significant income.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the area of finance?**

The school does not have any debt to service, and it collects tuition in a timely fashion. Through conservative budgeting and good internal controls, the school has balanced its budgets over recent years. Additionally, the school has a new school software package, Senior Systems, with a common data base for all modules, ensuring they reconcile with each other.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of finance?**

The school should continue to develop a moving ten-year financial analytical window allowing it to study operating statements during the previous five year period and forecasts over the next five-year period. The school seeks to allow the head of school and board of trustees to make informed decisions on the cost of some course offerings and policies such as the current "no cut" policy in sports.

School Program

In keeping with the Association's desire that the accreditation process serve as a tool for reflection and school improvement, this section is designed so that a school will take a clear-sighted and thoughtful look at its overall school program. Committee members chosen to work on this section will serve their school well by assessing and recommending the ways in which the current program can be enhanced. Such an approach will be most beneficial to the self-study process and to the school's progress beyond accreditation.

Good Practices #25-#28 ask the school to describe and evaluate its overall program from a whole school perspective. The school should establish a separate committee to address the questions for **Good Practices #25-#28**, whose goal is to frame a "big picture" view of the school's overall program. This committee should consist of individuals representing the various components of the school program: curricular and co-curricular, including athletic, outdoor education, and information services (library, technology, media, etc.).

Good Practices #29-#31 ask for a greater level of detail and depth about each aspect of a school's overall program through its constituent parts. To accomplish this, the school should select a perspective or a combination of perspectives that comprehensively depict all aspects of its overall school program. Some possible perspectives include age levels, grade levels, divisions, and subject area. A school might choose a grade level perspective for its lower school while choosing a departmental perspective for its middle and upper schools. This flexibility is intended to let a school define the most inclusive approach to describing, evaluating, and reflecting upon its program. Whichever framework is chosen, it should embrace all elements of the school's overall program: curricular and co-curricular, including athletic, outdoor education, and information services (library, technology, media, etc.).

In editing the final document, the school should avoid overlap of information in **Good Practices #29-#31** that was included in **Good Practices #25-#28**.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Hal Wing (Chair), Frank Phillips, Al Hunter, Jerry Burke, Debora McCreedy, Joe Volk, Betsy Moore, Peter St. Onge, Vincent Comerchero, James Joy, Cailey McCandless, Lewis Kerwin, Kelsey Gross, Elliot Anderson

Major Standard

The school's program is congruent with the school's mission, philosophy, and goals, and is in keeping with the PNAIS commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.

Good Practice #25: The school's overall program stems from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

25.1: What are the significant characteristics and primary objectives of the school overall program and how are they congruent with the school's mission?

St. Mary's School is an independent, Catholic, six- though twelve-grade, coeducational, college-preparatory school that seeks to help students develop their greatest potentials by educating the whole person and, according to the school's mission statement, providing "a community in which academic excellence combine with Catholic and democratic values to inspire and prepare responsible, local, national, and global citizens." Specifically, the school seeks to graduate students "who can use critical thinking and knowledge to navigate with confidence in diverse settings and show compassion for others along the way" and those "who appreciate the cultures and landscapes they encounter and lead lives guided by a true moral compass" (St. Mary's Portrait of a Graduate). In order to accomplish this goal, the school provides students with a broad spectrum of rigorous core and elective academic and co-curricular offerings and promotes service to the broader community as one of its highest ideals.

25.2: What beliefs and assumptions about how students learn inform...

25.2.a: The design of the overall program?

The school program stems from a number of guiding beliefs. The school believes that students learn best when they are safe, challenged, actively engaged, frequently assessed, given specific, relevant, and timely feedback on assignments, encouraged to make connections between various disciplines, provided with structured learning environments, given some choice in regards to assignments and course of study, provided with opportunities to assume adult-like leadership roles, and when they pursue a developmentally appropriate and carefully sequenced course of study, receive instruction from teachers who are discipline specialists, utilize a variety of modalities in the learning process, see the relevance of what they are learning, have access to instructional technology, are not subject to excessive stress, and recognize that their teachers conspicuously wish them daily success and genuinely care about their lives outside of school.

These beliefs affect the design of the overall program in a number of concrete ways. In both divisions, the curriculum is vertically sequenced and horizontally integrated. Content and skills are thus scaffolded, and the English, social studies, religion, and art curricula frequently parallel each other so that students can make connections between disciplines. In addition, students are required to take an array of classes in order to graduate, and in addition to a broad range of core courses, may choose from a number of challenging Advanced Placement courses and specialized elective offerings.

25.2.b: The approaches to teaching and curriculum development?

St. Mary's School's core beliefs about how students effectively learn profoundly shape both approaches to teaching and curriculum development. In all courses, students are taught by teachers who are specialists in their disciplines and who differentiate instruction when appropriate according to individual students' skills, abilities, interests, learning styles, and developmental needs. Teachers thus employ a variety of techniques and resources in an effort to actively engage, challenge, and inspire students. In addition, teachers and coaches encourage student responsibility and effort while at the same time recognizing individual achievement be it in class, on the field or court, at high school awards ceremonies, during eighth grade moving up, or as part of high school graduation. Finally, teachers strive to conduct themselves professionally at all times in their dealings with students and their parents.

The curriculum as a whole is also developed in a way to be carefully sequenced and horizontally integrated in both the middle and upper school divisions. In the lower grades, the conspicuous instruction of basic study skills complements the core curriculum and elective offerings. Horizontally integrated courses such as English and history, with occasionally art and religion as well, also permit students to make interdisciplinary connections. And activities such as the Larson Creek restoration project and the Twenty-Twenty Global Solutions Project assist students in seeing and appreciating the relevance of what they are learning. These projects have the added benefit of encouraging students to be responsible local and global citizens. The curriculum also provides opportunities for students to pursue areas of interest. Middle school electives thus include art, music, computers, orchestra, and drama.

In the upper school, the curriculum is developed both collaboratively and individually with the participation of individual teachers, departments, and representatives of the administration so that students complete a diverse and rigorous core course of study as a prelude to selecting classes from a host of Advanced Placement and elective offerings. Required courses include ancient history, human geography, early Church, world religions, classical Western and world literature, mathematics through algebra II but for a total of four years, two other religion courses, physics and two other science courses, either two years of Spanish, Latin, German, or Chinese, and one fine arts and one physical education course apiece. The school also offers seventeen Advanced Placement courses officially certified by the College Board, and students can choose from an array of elective offerings such as Shakespeare through performance, journalism, the modern Middle East, entrepreneurial leadership, modern China, 3-D computer art, and aikido to name but a few. The school also encourages teachers to develop enticing and relevant elective offerings in areas of their interest that complement the overall program. A complete listing of courses may be found in the course catalogue.

25.2.c: The structure of the school day and the school year?

The school day and year at St. Mary's School are structured with middle and high school students' developmental needs in mind.

As far as the day is concerned, in the middle school, students attend classes from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. and follow a traditional, non-rotating schedule that minimizes physical disruptions and unnecessary transitions. The school day starts with a fifteen-minute middle school morning meeting where a prayer is read, announcements made, and opportunities provided for middle-school students to develop leadership skills within the division. Students then make the transition to comfortable and well-decorated home rooms for their core morning courses, followed by elective and co-curricular offerings in the afternoon. In response to younger students' shorter attention spans, class periods in the middle school meet for fifty minutes each, and in order to provide students with additional psychological, social, emotional, and organizational support, students meet with their advisors as a group during the last fifteen minutes of each day.

In the upper school, the school day is also geared towards students' developmental needs. In the high school, the day runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and begins with a fifteen-minute morning

meeting except on Thursdays when students meet as a group with their advisors for a half hour. High school morning meetings serve a similar purpose as in the middle school, but also provide students with the opportunity to learn about community service opportunities and listen to guest speakers. In order to reduce student stress, minimize disruptions caused by athletic absences, compensate for biorhythmic troughs, and reduce disruptive transition times, high-school students follow a rotating schedule where eight classes rotate through six periods each day. The publication of a major assignment day schedule for each discipline so that students do not have more than two major assignments due each day, and the absence of first semester mid-term examinations in year-long classes also alleviate student stress. In addition, in recognition of the entrance into adulthood, seniors who do not have first period classes may elect to arrive later in the day, and upper school students are also given the privilege of off-campus lunches three-days a week.

In both divisions, and in order to provide opportunities for middle and high school clubs to meet during the day, Tuesdays have an extra-long "business-person's lunch." In addition, middle and high school lunches are staggered to minimize developmentally inappropriate mingling of students of widely different age groups and maturity levels. Finally, athletic practices in both divisions are scheduled following the normal school day in the afternoons and evenings.

The school year is also structured with students' interests in mind. The school year begins the week before Labor Day and runs through early June, when end of year assessments and capstone projects are scheduled. Students are given a traditional two-week Christmas break and a longer than usual two-week spring break that allows the school to schedule trips to Italy and elsewhere. The longer spring break also has the ancillary benefit of giving students in Advanced Placement classes an additional dead-week to study for exams in May and allows juniors the opportunity to work on their junior projects, twelve- to twenty-page, thesis-driven research papers in American studies. In addition, holidays and in-service days punctuate the year and provide students with several three-day weekends, many of which are designated "no homework weekends" for middle school students in order to reduce student stress and provide needed opportunities for family time.

The school year is also structured in such a way to encourage students in all grades to be good citizens and practice community service. Each spring, in lieu of regular classes, the entire student body participates in Spring Day when students engage in community service projects throughout the community. In addition, every two years, the school hosts a specially-focused day of guest speakers and break-out seminars. In 2007 this took the form of Global Solutions Day. Former seminar days were called Choices and Challenges. All of these days involve speakers coming to the school to offer seminar presentations on problems affecting the local, national, and global community.

25.2.d: The school's philosophy regarding the role of information services (technology, library, media, etc.)?

The school philosophy regarding the role of information services is that a free, open, and healthy academic community requires effort to provide students with opportunities to access information technology and how to use it effectively for research and other legitimate academic purposes,

and that students need some facility with information technology if they are going to be successful in their post-secondary lives. Library orientations in the middle and upper schools and the school's collaborative relationship with Southern Oregon University Library to assist students with their junior projects help achieve this goal as do individual class projects. The school recognizes however that an over reliance on certain technologies can result in the deskilling of students in certain domains. Calculator usage is thus discouraged in the lower level math classes, and class research projects often require students to make use of the library's print sources.

25.3: What opportunities does the school provide for communication, coordination, and integration between departments/grade-levels, etc? Please provide recent examples.

St. Mary's School provides numerous opportunities for communication, coordination, and integration among departments. Teachers serving in core middle-school teams and those teaching horizontally integrated upper school classes communicate frequently either in person or via e-mail throughout the year on grade-level assignments and issues. Larger issues related to curriculum design, to coordinate major assignment days, and to revise the junior project are discussed among department chairs and division heads. Departments also play a role in the communication process by explaining major departmental curricular revisions to the entire faculty periodically at weekly Tuesday morning faculty meetings. This forum has served, for example, as a means to inform teachers of recent changes to the English and social studies departmental curricula, and all teachers are scheduled to give presentations before the full faculty on their Meaningful Faculty Evaluation professional development goals. During the 2007-08 school year, the faculty heard numerous presentations from colleagues who attended the All Kinds of Minds, Schools Attuned Workshop that they attended in the summer of 2007.

Inter-departmental communication has also facilitated the school's efforts to achieve a high degree of horizontal integration and to organize a number of successful interdisciplinary projects. English and social studies with occasionally art and religion, for instance, are closely integrated in both the middle school and upper school. In the sixth grade, the study of ancient history and the reading of historical fiction are woven together seamlessly. In the seventh grade as well, students study the West and the world while reading historical fiction about various civilizations. Horizontal integration is particularly strong in the eighth grade. Eighth graders thus learn about United States history, study American literature, and participate in the Manor project, where they interview senior citizens whose biographies they write and later present to them. This paradigm of horizontal integration is also explicit in the upper school curriculum, especially in grades nine through eleven. In the ninth grade students study ancient history, western literature, and early church; in the tenth grade, they explore human geography, world literature, and world religions; and in the eleventh grade, they examine United States history, government, and American literature. Juniors are also required to complete the junior project, an interdisciplinary research paper in American studies.

Good Practice #26: The school's overall program is designed to provide students with a school experience that is in keeping with PNAIS's commitment to free and open inquiry in a humane and diverse society.

26.1: In what ways does the overall program...

26.1.a: Promote free and open inquiry?

The school promotes free and open inquiry in a variety of ways. In all classes, teachers encourage students to participate actively in class discussions, and in many classes they explore problems and issues from a multiplicity of angles and perspectives. Teachers also frequently give students choices on individual assignments and projects, such as the junior project. The administration also gives teachers a high degree of encouragement and freedom to develop their own lessons and curricula, and to pursue with the assistance of professional development funds individual interests that they might offer as elective courses. The school climate is thus such that both teachers and students are given the autonomy and encouragement to think for themselves. This free and open intellectual climate even extends to religion classes where students learn about other faiths, for example in world religions class, where they examine ethical issues from different perspectives.

26.1.b: Promote ethical development?

Teachers at St. Mary's School value the ethical development of their students as highly as their academic development. Faculty members serve as role models, and, as members of the school community, students are encouraged to treat each other with mutual respect and tolerance. In many of their classes, students also discuss ethical issues, and the school encourages students to think beyond the immediacy of themselves by conducting masses and prayer services, hosting Global Solutions Day Conferences, engaging in the Twenty-Twenty Global Solutions Project, and participating in Spring Day, an event in which, in lieu of normal classes, students in each grade participate in service to the broader community. St. Mary's School also requires students to take religion classes each year and to complete at least one hundred hours of community service in order to graduate. Both middle-school and upper-school graduation awards such as the Christ the King Award and the JFK Leadership Award further affirm the value that school places on students acting in ethical ways and in the service of others.

26.1.c: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

In order to graduate students who can "navigate with confidence in diverse settings and show compassion for others along the way" and "who appreciate the cultures and landscapes they encounter and lead lives guided by a true moral compass," St. Mary's School has developed a rich and diverse curriculum where multicultural perspectives, materials, and experiences comprise an integral and conspicuous part of students' core, elective, and co-curricular experiences. St. Mary's school requires core courses in world history, world literature, world religions, and human geography as well as elective offerings in the modern Middle East and modern China to name but a few. In each of these courses, students examine a wide variety of primary and secondary sources that convey a multiplicity of perspectives, and they engage in educational field trips such as the San Francisco World Religions trip, where they visit a variety of religious establishments in the Bay Area. The school also offers language courses in Mandarin, Spanish, German, Latin, the latter three at the Advanced Placement level, and as a means of broadening students' horizons, sponsors trips to Italy, Germany, Mexico, and China.

The school also hosts a group of students from Ochsenhausen, Germany each spring and has employed a visiting professor from Zhengzhou University in China.

Good Practice #27: The school's overall program is supported with sufficient resources to meet its mission and goals.

27.1: How are the school day and year planned so as to be of sufficient duration to meet program goals, and also so as to be in compliance with state requirements for length of school year?

Although St. Mary's is an independent Catholic school, its relationship with the Archdiocese of Portland includes the understanding that the school program will follow broad Archdiocesan standards concerning the duration of the school year. Therefore, St. Mary's always offers, as a minimum, a school year of sufficient length to meet Archdiocesan standards for instructional days and hours. In practice, the school usually exceeds the instructional hours requirement by significant margins due to its 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. school day, while offering a school year of 177-180 days. Instructional days and hours at St. Mary's are also well above State of Oregon requirements. The head of school, a former director of academics and school scheduler for fifteen years, works closely with administrators, the director of academic affairs, department chairs, and the faculty to ensure that the school's schedule allows sufficient meeting time for all courses to achieve their objectives.

27.2: What are the primary factors that influence how the school determines the current number of faculty and staff for the educational program? When was this process last reviewed?

St. Mary's is committed to maintaining a student-to-teacher ratio between 11-13 students per teacher. For the 2007-2008 school year, the ratio was 11:1. The school has discovered that this staffing level produces optimal class sizes, averaging 18 students in core classes and allows for some smaller classes in more specialized courses such as Advanced Placement foreign languages. As shown in numerous studies, class sizes of 15-23 students achieve very well academically. Studies show that smaller classes achieve at even better levels, but finances, tuition setting, and salary and benefit levels mitigate against a smaller student-to-teacher ratio, and the school is only able to maintain the student-to-teacher ratio above and to offer a high quality college-preparatory curriculum as a result of its current tuition fees and development efforts.

As part of the school's strategic planning session in April of 2006, participants reviewed faculty and administrative staffing levels and decided to add 1.6 FTE (teachers) in order to move some teacher-administrators into nearly full-time administrative roles. Similarly, in 2006-2007, ISM conducted a large-scale, feasibility study and reviewed staffing levels in the front office and for the advancement department; their suggestion was to add staff to the finance and development departments as well as a part-time clerical position to enhance the effectiveness of their development efforts.

27.3: How are the funding priorities of the overall program determined?

The head of school reviews the curricula and course offerings in light of the school's mission, and works throughout the year to develop the budget and allocate funds to deliver the school's programs. The addition or deletion of programs or courses is discussed at the board level insofar as they affect the mission of the school. The finance committee aids in compilation of a working budget and in the review and ultimate proposal to the full board of the actual budget for each school year. A working budget for the coming school year is approved in January each year and the final budget in September, after finance committee meetings in the summer.

27.4: How are resources allocated for information services (library, technology, media, etc.)?

The information technology director and the librarian work with the head of school throughout the year, via the budget cycle above, to assess information service needs, propose expenditures for maintenance and additions of service, and for capital expenditures. These expenditures are prioritized, and then the head relates these plans to the finance committee as it works on the overall school budget.

27.5: If the school is not able to furnish sufficient resources (information services, faculty, staff, materials or equipment) to meet the goals of the overall program, what are the plans to address this challenge?

For the past several years, the school has been able to furnish sufficient resources to meet the goals of the overall program. During a retrenchment in 2002, the school did have to reduce the number of teachers and drop a foreign language program from the curriculum. However, the student-to-teacher ratio was maintained.

Good Practice #28: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of its overall program.

28.1: What procedures are in place to determine and evaluate the efficacy of the overall program?

St. Mary's School evaluates the effectiveness of the program in a variety of ways. Parent and student surveys as well as retention and attrition rates provide valuable information on the degree to which the school is meeting its goals and on areas of concern. Student performances on Advanced Placement examinations, the PSAT-NMSQT, and International Schools Assessment tests provide information as to the effectiveness of the curriculum both nationally and globally. College acceptance and matriculation rates and the caliber of institutions that St. Mary's graduates attend also validate the effectiveness of the program. While the school might do a better job surveying alumni, anecdotal evidence of the successful endeavors of St. Mary's alumni add to the wealth of evidence confirming the overall strength of the program. Finally, student participation in meaningful community service, their positive reflections on it as part of their senior projects, and the expressed desire to continue to serve others testifies to the degree to which St. Mary's School is meeting its affective goals.

28.2: Based upon the surveys conducted, what are the overall program's strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of...

28.2.a: Faculty, staff, and administration?

28.2.b: Parents, students, and alumni?

Overall, members of the school community reported a high degree of satisfaction with the overall program of the school.

From the perspective of the faculty, staff, and administration, St. Mary's School is a caring institution that values academic excellence and wishes students conspicuous success. In the view of the faculty, St. Mary's School is a community that values high academic standards, wishes students conspicuous daily success, encourages professional development, disciplines students fairly, and has a respected and professional administration that supports teachers, parents, and students well. Members of the staff applauded the school for its constructive, upbeat, and positive atmosphere, collegial working environment, mission-driven and mission-appropriate focus, and support rendered to the faculty in their work with children. Survey responses also revealed almost unanimous great respect for their administrators on the part of staff members.

From the perspective of parents, students, and alumni, St. Mary's School demonstrates a number of strengths. Parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school for its safe environment; its excellent, enthusiastic, caring, and mission-guided teachers; its enjoyable co-curricular programs; and its high quality administration, effective procedures, and professional office staff. Students complemented the school on its caring, creative, enthusiastic, organized, knowledgeable, skilled, helpful, and mission-guided faculty who are fair, flexible, give high-quality assignments, and wish students conspicuous daily success. An overwhelming number of the alumni who responded to the survey felt that St. Mary's School provided a safe and secure learning environment, helped students gain important knowledge and skills in each subject, gave students opportunities to participate in meaningful extra-curricular activities, recognized all kinds of student achievement and accomplishment, offered students a high quality education, and prepared them well for college and the challenges they will face in the future. In addition, they felt that teachers held high expectations of students, challenged them to do their best, and helped them to become disciplined and creative thinkers. Alumni also felt that the school promoted free and open inquiry, provided an environment characterized by tolerance and respect for diversity, effectively taught the values of citizenship and community service, helped them to develop moral values, and instilled in them a passion for learning. The responses validate the high degree to which the school is achieving its mission.

Overall, weaknesses of the program are few. They include the perception among some faculty members that demonstrating the rendering formal or informal assistance to one's colleagues is not of crucial importance, as well as the perception of a small minority of parents that substance abuse and bullying are issues.

28.3: In what ways has the information from these surveys influenced the school's review, development, and future plans for its program?

Information gleaned from the surveys has influenced the review, development, and future plans for the program in a number of ways. The members of the administration and the department chairs reviewed the survey results and concluded that by and large they validated the overall

program. The administration felt that it could take additional proactive measures to deal with some of the issues raised by a minority of the survey respondents however, particularly regarding substance abuse, since in the realm of bullying, the school has an established conflict-resolution program in the middle school and over the past two years the school had hosted a parent-teacher educator to give a series of presentations to the faculty on bullying among adolescent boys and "queen bee" behavior among adolescent girls that heightened the faculty and administration's efforts to recognize and address them. To further discourage substance abuse, however, the administration augmented established programs that involved the routine sweeping of the campus with drug sniffing dogs and presentations at all-school morning meetings by the Medford Police Department about the dangers of drugs and alcohol with additional meetings between the administration and senior class parents and between trauma nurses and members of the junior and senior classes about the dangers of risky behavior.

28.4: What is the process for developing a new program? Describe a recent example of the development of a new program or the revision of an existing program.

New programs are developed in a variety of ways. Teachers, administrators, students, and/or parents may suggest course offerings. If a course or program meets the need of enhancing the horizontal or vertical integration of the curriculum, does a better job than an existing course of covering content and skills deemed important, is considered more developmentally or mission appropriate, or represents an innovative offering that will attract student interest while at the same time possessing intrinsic academic or co-curricular merit, the course is considered for development. Two examples of recently developed courses are the Encounter: the West and the world during the Age of Exploration, the seventh grade history/geography offering, and Shakespeare through performance, a semester-long, upper school elective. In the case of the West and the world, the director of academic affairs proposed a course that would better prepare students in geography, government, history, and culture than the existing seventh grade ancient history course. The chair of the social studies department and lead teacher of the course thus assembled a course design team, which agreed on a set of design parameters. The department chair then researched national geography and history standards, and drafted a course outline, which the design team, department, and administration approved. Once approval was granted, the design team carefully researched textbooks based on a variety of criteria. The course was evaluated during the year by the teachers of the class who solicited informal feedback from students. The positive evaluation of the course led to the decision to change the sixth grade social studies curriculum as well to enhance vertical integration. Shakespeare through Performance had a slightly different design path. Inspired by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant on Shakespeare, the teacher proposed and designed a semester-long course that would integrate literature, drama, and film. After meeting with the head of school, who determined that the necessary staffing was available, a description of the course was added to the course catalogue and the course was designed and taught for the first time during the fall 2007 semester. Other recently designed courses and programs include 3-D computer art, journalism, aikido, modern China, the modern Middle East, entrepreneurial leadership, the Bible as literature, anatomy, and Mandarin, to name but a few.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The overall strengths of the program--the richness of the course offerings, low student-to-teacher ratio, cutting-edge course content combined with an extensive Advanced Placement program, vital community service program, and the retention and nurturing of veteran and experienced faculty--all flow from an overarching application of the school's mission.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The on-going process of curriculum mapping, entering its third year during 2008-2009, should be used to yield a greater understanding of the overall program, how it builds upon itself, whether it might be improved to reduce student stress and achieve better horizontal, cross-curricular integration. The school should also look at the overall scheduling of classes. Currently, all classes meet for equal blocks of time. Greater efficiencies in learning and assigning teachers might be achieved with a more sophisticated schedule that would enhance the school program for all.

NOTE: Please insert a brief statement explaining how the school has chosen to organize its approach to Good Practices #29-#31 (e.g. by age, grade, division, subject area, etc.). Each grouping must respond to the individual questions for Good Practices #29-#31. The school's response to this section should be sure to cover all components of the school's overall program – curricular and co-curricular. Be sure to avoid overlap of information included in GP #25-#28.

The school has chosen to organize responses to good practice questions 29-30 by department, with each department choosing its own form of organization though most departments electing to provide a middle and upper school response for each question.

Computer Science

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Peter St. Onge (Chair), Scott Dewing, and Tim Tussing

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The computer science department is unusual inasmuch as it basically consists of a small variety of classes none of which specifically address the topic of computer science as its entire curriculum. Coursework is divided into two distinct arenas, a middle school introductory course, and upper school programming courses. As a consequence, the goals and objectives of the department are few and simple.

In the middle school, the computer science course is intended to provide students with a fundamental and basic understanding of how computers and computer systems function. Students are taught to use Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher and PowerPoint. In addition, students are taught typing.

At the upper school level, the goals and objectives are to provide interested students with a curriculum that allows them to learn how to program at a variety of levels, from introductory to advanced 3D game programming.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The major structural breakdown consists of the single introductory computer course provided in the middle school, and the course array provided for upper school students.

The middle school course, for seventh grade students, is a quarter-long course.

The upper school curriculum consists of the following courses:

- Introductory Programming
- Advanced C++ Programming I
- Advanced C++ Programming II
- Game Programming I
- Game Programming II

The programming courses have traditionally been taught without a lot of structure in terms of pacing. Students have been allowed to progress through the coursework at their own speed. This has allowed those students who are not familiar with computers to learn at a pace more appropriate for them than for other students who are already very familiar with computers and may already have done much learning on their own. Moreover, this individualized approach takes into account the natural differences between student abilities and interest. The exception to

this practice is the new curriculum in introductory programming, in which students progress through the curriculum at the same pace. Games courses are open ended, a practice that is developmentally appropriate since the more adroit students can add enhancements and other features to their games while the slower moving students complete the minimum game program. Game programming courses are also very student driven, allowing students to focus on the particular facet of game programming that interests them.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

It is believed that a rich, well-textured, visual-learning oriented environment enhances student motivation. In addition, it is believed that a hands-on learning situation with immediate results and feedback provide for both motivation and quicker learning.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

There is an important distinction between the coursework of the middle school and that of the upper school. All students are required to take the middle school introductory computer science course, while the upper school courses are purely elective, and students in the upper school select courses because they have an interest in the material and have some degree of inherent motivation. The introductory programming course supplements this natural motivation by adding the components of a visually oriented programming methodology, and by involving the creation of student-generated games that are visually pleasing and include sound. In addition, the computer science courses are all hands on and outcome-oriented so that students are rewarded by successful programming. The amount of lecturing is kept to a minimum to ensure that students are engaged in the learning as much as possible. The lack of emphasis on lecturing allows students to work together and communicate to help each other find solutions to the problems presented by the various curricula.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Computer programming is unique in the extremity of its emphasis, and requirement for, analysis, synthesis, design, logic and general problem solving. As one student once remarked, every problem in computer programming is a "story problem." This emphasis on creative problem solving promotes academic excellence and intellectual curiosity. Many of the students who sign up for these courses are those who do not participate in other activities. The computer courses and open hours of the computer lab enable these students to come together and develop a sense of community that they might not otherwise be able to find. The lab thus forms a bridge into the larger student body as a whole.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The natural requirements of programming computer games require research and penetrating thought. In addition, the open-ended nature of the course work, allowing students to proceed at

their own rate and investigate areas of their own interest (especially in the 3D Game programming), naturally encourages students to engage in free and open inquiry.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The middle school course, required of all students, deliberately spends time and focus on ethical issues surrounding computers. At the upper school level, there is no such deliberate focus on these issues. However, classes in general, and the requirement that programs actually compile and work correctly, promote integrity of effort. The development of community among these students promotes peer pressure to develop their own excellent work.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

There is little room in programming for multicultural perspectives or experiences. Ultimately, those who are interested in programming find that the same languages, such as C++ have world wide standards in terms of syntax, etc., and are used across the world as is, that is, without further translation into other languages. In learning a language such as C++, students are learning a globally used language.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Clearly technology is a key element of the computer science course. Students spend the majority of their time using computers. Occasional use is also made of a computer projector to share with the class as a whole some particular topic. Probably the most significant challenge the department faces is the continued need for professional development on the part of teachers in order to maintain pace with the fast changing computer world and the interests of students. This challenge is met through professional development.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The strongest integration of the programming class is with the art department through the 3D computer art and animation class. This course was designed and instituted with the knowledge and expectation that work done in this class could be ported into 3D or even 2D games. The software used in the computer art class, 3ds Max, is an industry standard for producing graphics in computer and video games. Computer game programming also makes extensive use of mathematics as well as physics in order to simulate real-world movements. Experience shows that students working at this level of programming find renewed interests in the other curricula.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Distribution of human resources is made by the administration according to the needs and desires of the student body. In its decisions, the administration takes into account input and opinions from the department chair as well as other teacher input, parental concerns, and student desires.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Instructional materials have been traditionally selected and chosen solely at the discretion of the department chair with ultimate approval by the head of school. The reason for this is because traditionally there has been only one instructor in the computer science department, at least in terms of upper school courses. Instructional materials for the middle school courses are approved by the middle school head, and these materials mostly consist of a workbook on Microsoft Office, and the Maevis Beacon typing software. These materials have been in use for several years.

Computer hardware was selected based on end-user and instructor input regarding needs as well as the software vendor's stated hardware requirements. Once the proper hardware was specified and reviewed, it was purchased by the information technology department through an already established hardware vendor.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The department currently has sufficient resources for its coursework.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

The nice thing about computer programming is its almost instantaneous feedback. In general, a program works correctly or it does not. There are of course, the usual tests, some written, some programming based. But the greatest sense of feedback has come anecdotally from returning students who have always reported that they are far in advance of their college peers in terms of programming skills. In a few cases, students have reported becoming the teacher's assistant for the course.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

There have been few professional development opportunities in this department. Since the high school courses have traditionally been taught by a single individual this is not surprising considering that same individual also teaches the AP Calculus and other math courses. Nonetheless, that teacher is currently taking an online course in DirectX programming. While

this does not change how the course is taught, or the curriculum content, it has provided a broader knowledge base for helping students with their difficulties and interests in programming.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The main weakness of the computer science department is that other than the middle school introductory course, the department does not offer any curriculum other than programming (discounting the 3D Computer Art and Animation, which falls under the umbrella of the Art Department). On the national level, a weakness in computer science is radically declining enrollment, especially among girls. St. Mary's has seen this same decline in the number of enrolling students.

A particular strength of the program is that it offers as many years of programming as a student can take. The department has allowed students in as early as seventh graders to take programming and to continue to take programming for every year in their St. Mary's career. In addition, with the popularity of computer gaming, and the vast financial position of video gaming, the offering of coursework that culminates in learning 3D computer game programming provides both a rigorous computer programming curricula as well as coursework in consonance with student desire and industry need.

Another strength in the program is the interface with the 3D computer art and animation course. Students who take the art course as well as game programming find that their art work and animation can be ported into their game programming. This situation was intentionally created several years ago when the current computer science department chair brought the computer art class online in response to student request and the popularity of 3ds Max in computer games and applications.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The department is looking to address the lack of curriculum offerings by adding a hardware-oriented course starting next school year. The course is designed to provide students with hands-on experience supporting and maintaining a Local Area Network (LAN), including desktop/laptop computers, file servers, and network infrastructures (switches, routers, firewalls, etc.). As part of this course, students will gain competency and skills in installing, configuring and troubleshooting desktop- operating systems and in providing end-user technical support. They will also learn about network topology, monitoring and troubleshooting methodology.

• **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

Particular strengths of the program are that it offers as many years of programming as a student can take and that it effectively interfaces with the 3D computer art and animation course.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school needs to provide a hardware-oriented course and to work to increase enrollment in computer courses, especially with respect to enrolling more girls in the program.

An added note for the year 2008 – 2009: This year the middle school computer course has been discontinued. The reasons for this are both constraints in the available staff and an increasing tendency of incoming students to already have a grasp of basic computer processes and keyboarding. As with any curriculum change, this change will be evaluated on a yearly ongoing basis.

English

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Alastair Hunter (Chair), Ann Hunter, Mike McGrath, Lesley Klecan, Laura Anderson, Tami Lohman, John Ward

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The English department aims to produce discriminating and enthusiastic readers and sensitive and discerning listeners. This in its turn should inform the students' own writing in terms of both technical sophistication and intellectual breadth. While working toward this goal, the department also tries to foster within its students an awareness of the range and complexity of the human condition, that they may hold an affinity for and can empathize with all humanity. English teachers are committed to promoting a lifelong love of literature, while on a more practical level, preparing students for PSAT and SAT tests, AP examinations, and a successful college experience.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The program has distinct middle- and upper-school components that nevertheless are governed by a common ethos that sees good writing as deriving from good, developmentally appropriate, reading.

The middle-school English program, as is the case in the high school, is literature-based. Students study the mechanics of writing within the context of reading poetry, novels, and short stories selected for each grade level to support and expand the material covered in their social studies classes. Students are also asked to read from a selected list of books over the summer. This year, the faculty organized book-group activities for each of the summer reading selections, and students spent three hours participating in group discussions and activities designed to stimulate their interest in reading.

Sixth graders read five works of historical fiction over the course of the year. Each book supplements their study of ancient civilizations. Students keep reading journals in which they respond to questions designed to help them learn about basic story structure, character development, the use of dialogue, and such figurative language as similes and metaphors. They also learn about story structure, including setting, character, conflict, and resolution. Within the context of these assignments, students receive specific instruction in grammar, spelling, punctuation, editing, and MLA formatting. Students also learn to write speeches, research reports, and essays, with a focus on developing good topic sentences, supporting details, and strong conclusions. Vocabulary lists are generated from literature, history, and math curricula.

Seventh graders read five novels over the course of the year, with a focus on multicultural literature. Texts include *The Giver*, *The Whale Rider*, *The Shakespeare Stealer*, and *I Am the*

Clay with a focus on structure, figurative language, character development, plot and theme. Vocabulary, spelling and grammar units are developed directly from the texts. Attached to the literature units are writing units that include five-paragraph expository essays, daily journaling, poetry and creative writing. Writing units focus on the writing process, including pre-writing, drafting and revising. Students are taught to develop a well-planned thesis, and the MLA formatting taught in grade six. The curriculum of grade seven bridges the reading and writing skills taught in the sixth-grade curriculum to the more thoughtful dissection of literature that occurs in grade eight.

Eighth graders work to transition from basic skills to the critical analysis of literature. Students read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Bless Me, Ultima*, a novel of their choice, the biography of an American (specifically tying into the history curriculum), a collection of short stories, and a collection of poetry. Students write creative and analytic responses to the literature throughout the year. Eighth graders also participate in an oral history project with a local retirement community. Students interview retirees several times over the course of a month and then write short biographies of them that are printed and shared with the retirement community. By the end of eighth grade, students have been prepared to recognize structural elements of literature (including figurative language), to write in a variety of styles, and to analyze works from different perspectives.

The middle-school program is designed to prepare the students for a smooth transition to the high school.

As in the middle school, the department does not track students in the high school. All upper-school English classes at St. Mary's contain students from across the ability range, are literature-based, and encourage students to close read and analyze texts of the highest quality. Teachers seek to inculcate in students an understand of the role of technique and style in articulating serious ideas and to have this developing understanding increasingly inform students' own writing. The objective is that by the end of the sophomore year, students will feel comfortable writing analytical and expository responses to fiction, poetry, and drama using the MLA format.

In the freshman year, written responses combine the creative, empathetic, and analytical modes. Students read *Gilgamesh* (selections), *The Odyssey*, *Antigone*, Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf*, selections from the *Inferno*, and two Shakespeare plays, always including *Macbeth*. There is an excellent theater near the school, and students are taken to see a Shakespeare play in production. Students then explore the relationship between a play as the written word and a play as a living performance. In the sophomore year the students study modern world literature, including novels by Mahfouz, Ha Jin, Amos Oz, Rushdie, Kawabata, and Achebe, supplemented by the best in non-western poetry and short stories. In junior English students begin to cover the material mandated as part of the AP English: Literature and Composition course. This gives students two full years to work on AP English. The course is a college-level survey of American literature from the New England Puritans to the present.

The senior English program is composed of a group of highly focused semester-long electives. The objective is both to increase student choice and to give a taste of the more narrowly targeted college literature experience. To complete preparation for the AP Literature and Composition

exam, all students begin by taking a first semester class in Renaissance English literature. For the second semester, students select any one of three further semester-long electives: English Victorian literature, Twentieth Century Irish literature, or the literature of the First World War and the Modernist period. All readings are taken from individual texts or from anthologies. Each course is designed to last eighteen weeks.

In the senior year students also have the opportunity to choose from a series of electives that come under the general purview of the English department and which complement the core program but which allow students to explore different elements of writing and reading: journalism, creative writing, screenwriting, and Shakespeare through performance and film.

Shakespeare through performance and film focuses on the in-depth study of three of Shakespeare's plays with the intention that students will develop an appreciation of the power of Shakespeare's language, be able to identify major themes of the plays, construct essential questions connected to these themes, and understand some of the variety of ways these plays may be staged, either in the theater or on film. Over the course of the semester, students write essays on each play that derive from essential questions formulated in class; perform scenes using the language correctly and comprehending the intention of the character speaking the lines; complete homework assignments of short essay questions that deal with themes, plot, and characters in the plays; relate quotations in the play to major themes of the play and to the play as a whole in tests or homework assignments; discuss in class and in written work the various language devices used by Shakespeare that heighten dramatic intensity; create a mask for a character in a play and perform a scene wearing the mask; and complete a learning journal through the course of the semester.

Journalism is a course in which students are introduced to the basics of journalism and gain competency in journalistic writing. Through hands-on exercises and projects, students learn how to determine viable news and feature topics, conduct interviews, do fact-finding research, and write and edit publishable articles. The end product of their work is a student-produced magazine, *The Inquisitor*, and a news website. In addition to improving their writing skills, students learn about publication design (both printed and on the web), photography, journalism history, and media law and ethics.

Creative writing is a class that aims to enthuse and inform students about the possibilities for expressing themselves through language, most notably fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry. The aim is to teach students the two "halves" of writing (craft and creativity), and for students to create a body of writing that can be used for future, longer pieces. After generating a body of writing in response to class exercises, students then create a longer piece independently. Revision and editing processes are taught at this stage. Throughout the year, students read examples of fine writing which highlight specific elements being discussed in the development of the students' own writing skills. By the end of the year, each student submits a piece to the student arts magazine, *The Muse*.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

The English department is committed to a literature-based curriculum in which all teaching is derived directly from reading. Good reading feeds directly into good writing, which feeds back into good reading and so on. Believing that contextualized learning is best for English students, teachers do not use textbooks or published worksheets. Correct grammar, vocabulary acquisition, structural organization, and the various techniques of argumentation are all taught directly out of the literature and feed directly into the students' own writing. Students are encouraged to take risks intellectually and creatively. The English faculty believes that students perform best when it is clear that expectations are high—teachers seek to challenge all students. The approach through the grades is informed by Bloom's taxonomy and has the ultimate objective of creating readers who can extract the essence of complex ideas from their reading and articulate their own responses to them in fluent, sophisticated prose. Teachers embrace throughout the program the creative, empathetic, and cerebral faculties of their students. The department is committed to the need for differentiated instruction within each classroom, diverse student-centered forms of assessment, and a clear vertical scaffolding through the grade levels—students learn in a variety of ways, there are many ways in which they can best demonstrate what they have learned, and teachers believe that what is being taught at any given moment should build directly upon what was taught earlier. The department aims to teach to the multiple intelligences students possess. Technology is used throughout both as a means of improving writing and, when properly used, as a valuable research tool.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

The St. Mary's English program fulfills the school's mission by helping students strengthen their critical reading and writing skills. This is achieved mainly through a carefully selected group of texts that span the human experience from the dawn of literacy to the present. These works, which have been chosen because they present a broad range of viewpoints, raise important moral questions, foster intellectual curiosity and remind students of their ethical responsibilities to each other as human beings. While reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students are exposed to challenging modes of written language and to the exchange of ideas that is essential to democratic discourse; students are encouraged to develop opinions thoughtfully, to define their values, and to practice the various modes of expression that writing offers: creative, analytical, and critical. Finally, English classes at St. Mary's allot time to prepare students for success on the PSAT and SAT exams.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The St. Mary's English program promotes free and open inquiry both through its carefully selected reading material and the structure of the learning environment. The curriculum is built upon primary texts, which are grade-level appropriate and representative of the rich tapestry of human experience. In the classroom, students are encouraged to indulge their curiosity, to develop the necessary skills of attentive listening and respectful discussion that epitomize seminar-style learning, and to be mindful of the responsibilities inherent in being part of a diverse community of learners and thinkers. Because the curriculum is often integrated across the

social studies and religion departments, students are able to synthesize information across disciplines and to pose more incisive questions during class discussions.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The St. Mary's English program promotes ethical development through reading, discussion, and self-reflection. Students are exposed to a rich variety of texts that raise fundamental questions on the origin and nature of life, as well as the relation of self to society. The ethical dilemmas embedded in these works, from the archetypal to the most modern, invite students and faculty to discuss, reflect upon, and justify their positions. Students are encouraged to weigh facts and opinions carefully, to seek nuanced solutions, to exercise empathy, and to arrive at judgments with deliberative care.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

The St. Mary's English program promotes diverse and multicultural experiences primarily through its reading selections. In many cases, our English curriculum complements the study of religion and social studies. The seventh grade curriculum focuses on texts that examine Muslim, Hebrew, Hittite, Mayan, and Korean cultures. The eighth and eleventh grades look at the American experience through Native American and African American eyes, both male and female, along with those of the descendents of European settlers. The ninth grade reading selections explore the epic traditions, both oral and written, of the Middle Eastern, Greek, and Anglo-Saxon cultures, as well as the emerging Elizabethan tradition. The tenth grade curriculum includes contemporary narrative and ancient lyrical works by Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Israeli, African, and Egyptian authors. And finally, the twelfth grade English curriculum, which is primarily elective offerings, offers students a choice of the literature of World War I, twentieth-century Irish literature, and the literature of English Victorian writers. All twelfth grade students are required to study the literature of the English Renaissance. Within this diverse offering of courses, students are encouraged to understand and respect cultural differences while they seek to find a universality of themes common to all human experience.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Technology is used in a variety of ways throughout the middle and high school. The school's computer laboratory and its mobile laptop cart are used for in-class assignments and to aid lessons on the writing process, editing, and revision; the internet is used extensively as a research tool; students submit papers and receive feedback via email, and teachers are increasingly administering web-based assignments. A comprehensive collection of DVDs and video tapes in the library provides a valuable resource for the department.

Though the school is well supplied with computer technology, like any school it would like more to facilitate easier access and to eliminate competition for resources. The internet provides challenges in both the areas of preventing plagiarism and teaching students to evaluate the

quality of sources. The program actively works to keep students clearly aware of the pitfalls in these areas.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The middle-school English faculty link their writing assignments to material covered in social studies classes. In sixth grade, for example, history and English have been combined under the umbrella title of Theme. Writing assignments, including essays, research reports, speeches, journal entries, and vocabulary lists are derived from their study of ancient civilizations and supporting works of historical fiction. A typical integrated assignment in English would be to write an essay comparing the advantages and disadvantages of claiming to have the Mandate of Heaven while studying the ancient Chinese dynasties in history.

The high school English department program is carefully integrated with the social science and religion departments. In ninth grade the focus is on epic poetry from *Gilgamesh* and Homer through *Beowulf* and Dante and on drama from ancient Greece to Shakespeare; this runs alongside ancient and early medieval history in social science and the study of early Church in religion. Tenth grade students study modern world literature as they explore world geography and world religions. The eleventh grade English curriculum is a college-level survey course which complements both AP Government and AP US History classes. Senior English is based on a series of student electives designed to enhance and be enhanced by senior studies in AP European History, AP Art History, AP Economics, Catholic literature, journalism, Shakespeare through performance and film, screenwriting, and creative writing.

The junior project—a college-level, fully researched and documented term paper—encourages students to make connections across the curriculum in defense, with the aid of a faculty mentor, of an independently developed thesis. Students are encouraged to ask questions across the subjects within the humanities and between the humanities and the creative arts and sciences.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

A number of factors influence the distribution of human resources within the department. The most important factor in making teaching assignments is to assign classes to teachers based on their expertise in a particular field. However, teachers' interests and the needs of the division and school in general are considered, as is teacher workload, which typically varies from five to six classes and two to four preps.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Each year, the department chair is asked to submit a budget in cooperation with department members. Department members are surveyed to plan major purchases and costs associated with new course offerings so that they can be budgeted for accordingly. Department members then submit their requests for purchases to the department chair who approves them before they are made.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

A lack of resources is not a pressing problem.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

The English department has wide ranging methods to assess and evaluate students' progress, learning, and development. The primary methods are writing and class discussion. Responding to either specific or open-ended questions on texts, and literary essays or creative assignments, such as imitations of original forms or styles, are both common means of assessment. Class discussion is the most common class activity. Occasional written tests on units or specific texts occur as do final exams at the end of the year. Oral presentations are also incorporated in an effort not only to assess students' understanding, but to enhance their confidence and verbal acuity. Finally, a portfolio of each student's writing is kept and reviewed in some classes. Teachers report students' progress to parents every four weeks using narratives about each class and about each student. Sophomores and eighth graders take part in the ISA tests. All middle schoolers take the Stanford and OLSAT standardized tests. All freshmen, sophomores, and juniors take the PSAT and are given a detailed report back to help them improve. Students also practice SAT essays periodically. All juniors write a thesis-driven research paper of 12-20 pages that centers on two humanities classes. Both juniors and seniors are further evaluated through the taking of AP tests. Seniors are ultimately evaluated in the college admissions process.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

As part of the school's program, all faculty are required to submit proposals for and to complete, a program of meaningful professional development annually—the Meaningful Faculty Evaluation program designed by Independent Schools Management—these records are available for review.

English department teachers of AP English literature and Composition regularly attend College Board seminars for the course, and this was particularly useful in the redesign of the senior English program. Recently, one of the members of the department was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to study how Shakespeare is translated from the page to the stage at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. This resulted in the creation of a new, semester-long, elective class for seniors, designed to supplement the department's AP Renaissance English literature class, in which students study Shakespeare's work as living theatre and performance. On a broader level, several members of the English department have attended Schools Attuned workshops and, along with colleagues from other departments, are involved in training the department and entire faculty to respond more effectively to every student's specific strengths and weaknesses in their day-to-day teaching.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The program's strengths include its enthusiastic, experienced, well-educated, and well-read faculty who are free from the restraints of a prescribed curriculum; a literature-based curriculum that is broad, encompassing classic/classical literature alongside the contemporary, and western as well as non-western literature; literature that is stimulating and demanding; a curriculum that emphasizes writing as a means of evaluation and attaining language fluency; a good library and easy computer access for research; supportive administrators; easily accessible curriculum maps; access to money for teaching materials and opportunities for faculty enrichment; a good sense of collegiality in the hallways and faculty room; a growing pool of electives that includes journalism, Shakespeare through performance, creative writing, and a choice of literature options in senior English classes; and involvement in nationwide competitions such as the National Council of Teachers of English writing award.

The department's weaknesses include the need for a formal remediation system with a trained specialist for guidance; a formalized system of following students from year to year in order to assess their development, particularly students who struggle with reading and writing; a more effectively vertically integrated 6-8 curriculum; consistent work on grammar and vocabulary as part of literary study in the middle school; more time to share ideas and strategies; balanced class sizes; and the retention of middle school teachers to ensure a fully integrated curriculum.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The department plans in the coming year to formalize the identification and tracking through the grades of students with learning difficulties. Ideally, the aim is to send each student on to the next grade with a file identifying particular needs and areas for growth. Though the middle and high school share the same literature-based approach to teaching, the department needs to meet together more frequently to fine tune the correspondence between the two divisions and to ensure that the transition from high to middle school is as smooth as possible. In the area of the need for expertise in helping students who need remediation, in the short term, the department needs to set up an after school reading and writing laboratory staffed by English department members. In

the middle term, a faculty member will be asked to study remediation techniques as part of his/her MFE and then to train the rest of the department. In the long term, as the school grows, the employment of a fully trained remediation specialist is the goal.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The English department has a highly educated, energetic faculty expert in the teaching of both literature and writing, who enthusiastically deliver a broad, literature-based curriculum, which can be, and is, continually being reviewed to ensure both diversity and topicality

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The department needs to put in place a formalized system for identifying, following, and helping through the grades students with difficulties and to put into place a formal system to help students with special needs. The department also needs to improve coordination between the middle and upper schools.

Fine Arts

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Betsy Moore (Chair), Elise Kendrot, Michael Wing, and Patty Hume.

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The art department has three disciplines: visual art, drama, and music. In each of these disciplines, the goal is to activate each student's interest in the arts through instruction in technique, group dynamics, history, and exposure to important people in the discipline. Department objectives are organized for students to learn incrementally. Students build on each technique or method, until they realize their personal voices. Individual practice, group participation and personal improvement are essential goals of each class. Arts classes utilize teachers as formal instructors of method as well as role models outside the classroom in their area of expertise.

In middle school visual arts classes, the major goals are to build confidence in personal art skills, to explore specific artists and art cultures, and to develop cooperative art skills by working with others in a communal studio environment. Classes in the arts cover traditional arts and crafts such as painting, drawing, pottery, printing, fibers and sculpture. Sixth grade students examine the work of various modern artists and ancient cultures. Seventh grade students explore the art of various world cultures from the Middle Ages through the Age of Exploration, and eighth grade students focus on American artists and art and design concepts.

In the upper school visual arts classes, the major goals are to build a firm foundation in art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. These four areas are explored in a vertical curriculum, which includes the courses art I, art II, art III, and art IV/AP Studio Art. The focus in art I is on technical craft, art concepts and the "ism" art movements, such as Impressionism, Cubism, and Fauvism. In art II, students continue to refine their technical skills and study the principles of art, contemporary artists, and art practices. In art III and IV/AP Studio Art, students continue to hone their technical skills and develop their personal artistic voices, using art history as a tool to develop their ideas. The 3D computer art and animation course provides students with a non-traditional, technologically-oriented mode for exploring and developing the major goals of the art department.

Middle school music classes are planned to provide a meaningful foundation for all students. Two of the three classes (sixth grade music and middle school choir) have a "general music" component, the goal of which is to develop an understanding of the elements, culture, and history of music. All three classes (middle school orchestra, in addition to those named above) also include performances, where students develop a repertoire of music to present to the community. Each class syllabus states the following goal: "Develop musical knowledge, satisfaction, and public appreciation of a variety of musical styles."

Upper school music also features three classes, two of which are strictly performance groups. These two--high school choir and jazz band--are non-audition groups which attempt to provide meaningful musical experiences to students with a wide range of experiences. In each group, students receive significant practical and technical instruction, with additional emphasis placed on artistic interpretation of a variety of styles. The third class in the upper school alternates annually between Advanced Placement Music Theory and advanced music history. Offered to juniors and seniors, these two courses attempt to prepare motivated students for deeper explorations of music in their post-high school careers.

The drama program aims to give students a chance for self expression on a stage and through development of the many skills offered through the experience of theater. Middle school drama provides students with a broad survey of theater arts emphasizing spontaneity, listening, making a commitment to choices, and working with others. Stage combat, pantomime, and puppetry are among the units studied. Upper school production classes give students the opportunity to showcase their craft. Film appreciation, to be offered in the 2008-09 year, seeks to give students knowledge of film history and different genres.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

In the middle school, students select from a menu of semester-long electives consisting of courses in the arts, computers, and language.

Middle school visual arts classes are a semester long. All sixth graders take a required art class. Seventh and eighth graders may choose to take an art elective. Upper school art classes are year-long, sequential classes, beginning with art I. In addition, the department offers two year-long courses in computer art, a beginning and advanced course. Occasionally, students take partial year or independent study classes to accommodate their schedules. AP Studio Art allows technically accomplished and highly motivated students to prepare a portfolio that is reviewed by the College Board and can be used for college credit.

In middle school music, all sixth graders take a general music class that exposes them to the fundamentals of music, orchestral instruments, and the music of other cultures. Students participate through listening, singing, movement, and composing original pieces. Middle school music student groups (choir/orchestra) learn new techniques and study new genres, and present them in two concerts each semester. The choir also explores contemporary music through prepared lesson materials and directed listening of student-contributed popular songs.

While all groups in the school maintain a no-cut policy, upper school music groups (choir/jazz band) aspire to a higher degree of excellence in performance and technique. Advanced Placement Music Theory is offered every other year. It follows the guidelines of the AP program and prepares students to take the AP Music Theory test. In the years AP Music Theory is not offered, a semester-long class, advanced music history, is offered for juniors and seniors. It covers the history of Western civilization through music, from Greek music to classical, jazz, rock, pop, and musical theater. Instrumental students may also find an outlet for their performing interests in a chamber ensemble, which periodically meets after school.

Middle school drama is organized into ten-week classes, allowing students to experience the joy of theater, including mask, role-play, character development, and improvisation. Occasionally, the eighth grade classes stage a performance of a short play or set of scenes.

In upper school drama, students take year long courses in Actor's Workshop or Writing for Stage and Screen. Each class offers students a chance to develop their personal talents, expanding their knowledge of theatre history, technique and performance styles. Drama productions include a fall play and a spring musical, and occasionally a film festival.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The fine arts department uses a multifaceted approach to teaching students. Because it enrolls students at all grade levels, teachers are adept at designing age-appropriate activities, geared to student success through participation. Middle school visual arts and music classes meet for one semester, allowing students to explore several disciplines before entering high school. One upper school fine arts class is required for graduation.

In the visual arts, the faculty believes that all students of art learn best through experimentation and the honing of skills rather than by producing “cookie cutter” types of artwork. Because process versus product is emphasized, students of all levels can achieve success. Students build upon techniques and concepts learned at lower levels. As a result advanced students have a large framework of technical and conceptual processes that they can use to create sophisticated art. The visual arts department also believes drawing skills are learned best through observational drawing, a major component of the program.

In music classes, product (performance) drives most of the classes. However, the study of music is approached comprehensively and in an integrated fashion. All aspects of music are presented, including the life and times of the composers, styles of music, and methods of public presentation. In order to keep all learning styles engaged, music classes are not exclusively based on singing or playing, but incorporate learning through technology (CDs, computer arrangements for accompaniments or playing certain parts), listening to professional recordings, watching videos of concerts, and working on sight reading and writing notations.

In drama classes, teachers aspire to develop different strengths and learning styles of students. Physical agility and analytical and interpretive skills are practiced with the goal of developing the whole actor.

29.3.b: Your particular program’s approaches to teaching?

St. Mary’s believes the arts offer students unique opportunities for learning which are not always available through other disciplines. Classes in the arts are organized to allow students to experience different styles of learning (visual, auditory, tactile, kinetic, social, and emotional) through performance, control of techniques with various materials, movement in space, open ended assessment, self evaluation, etc. Teachers require daily in-class participation instead of

homework, but upper level courses require students to work outside of class to accomplish more advanced work. The belief that St. Mary's art classes are preparing students to be life-long lovers of the arts encourages teachers to model personal commitment to the best practices of the day in classes, to bring in guest artists, and to take students on field trips.

In visual arts classes, projects and assignments utilize visual, oral, and written instructional and assessment components. Students are assessed in two main categories: artwork and effort. Thus, students are allowed a degree of success even if their artwork is not of award-winning caliber.

In music classes, participation is the key to personal growth and is the main method of evaluation. Students' behaviors are expected to be appropriate to their developmental stage and to help foster a positive group dynamic. Each class is structured to meet the needs of three types of students: newcomers who have little musical experience and need affirmation of the innate abilities they do possess; students who want to be part of a successful production and are willing to work together (in a "team" setting) to achieve that success; and advanced students who desire a place to contribute their talents.

In drama class, work in class is active and dynamic, and involves daily cooperation and group focus.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

The arts at St. Mary's embody all of the values of the mission, especially those relating to curiosity, compassion, community participation, and development of personal mores. The arts teach that there are many methods of communication and ways to see and interpret the world. Art students are encouraged to explore their full, creative potential at St. Mary's, while learning to balance the traditional academic loads that are part of the ethos of the school. Indeed, their academic and intellectual pursuits heighten their expression in the arts.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The arts classes are uniquely structured to allow for safe dialogues, inquiry, and personal growth of students. Each teacher plans a course of instruction and outcomes, but remains flexible enough to lead group or individual discussions on topics that concern students. In the visual art and drama classes, the intimacy of small class size is one reason that the art program can excel in open discussion. In addition, the very nature of the arts encourages students to arrive at solutions not always planned in advance. Teachers encourage students to be creative, think in broad abstract styles, and take risks.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

Because art classes often require students to work in groups, to discuss current events, to examine their inner lives through creation, and to learn the language of critical evaluation, they give students opportunities to develop ethical sensibilities. Arts classes stress developing the

etiquette for working in a group, and for critiquing other performers, artists, and professionals in the world beyond the schoolroom.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

Art, drama, and music classes provide students with exposure to a wide variety of modalities and mediums, from water colors, to masks, to musical styles, to computer generated graphics. This exposes students to a wide variety of experiences and perspectives as they develop their artistic talents and appreciations. In addition, art becomes a vehicle for students to explore human culture in all its myriad artistic diversity.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

In visual arts classes, DVDs, videos, PowerPoint presentations, and slides are used to present information. Over the past several years, the department has improved its video/ DVD library and purchased a digital camera and lights for taking pictures of student work. The department also has a television and slide projector in the classroom, and it purchased a computer projector (ELMO) in the spring of 2008 that gives teachers greater access to current technology. The Elmo is used to project images from books, DVDs, the computer, and the internet.

The art department is also proud to present students with a very rare opportunity for upper school students, the development of three-dimensional computer-generated graphics. This course is completely technology driven, with classes taught in the computer lab. The software used in the course is AutoDesk's 3ds Max, an industry standard for producing graphics in computer and video games.

Significant problems that all of the art classes have in regard to technology (excluding 3D computer art) are working out access to electrical outlets (there are only a few in the art rooms), relocating computer materials (rolling carts, etc.) to the art room quickly and safely, and teacher training in current technology for the arts.

In music, equipment includes a computer used for arranging music and playing MP3s and burning CDs, three small keyboards, a TV/VCR setup, an older, shared sound system, choir microphones, speakers, a multitude of CDs, MP3s, and vinyl records, and a DVD player to review concert recordings using the school's video camera. All four music classes have different technology demands. The computer is used for all classes, with the software program Finale employed to generate accompaniments for choral groups and rearrange and generate music parts for instrumental classes. Technology needs include upgrading computer programs and sound system equipment, and creating a keyboard lab for sixth grade music classes.

In drama, technology is relatively limited. In the multipurpose room, there are some stage lights, but the light board is not computerized. The program currently lacks the major lighting and sound technology aspects that are vital to a strong drama program. However, the school's long range-facilities strategic plan calls for the construction of a modern performing arts center.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

Within the fine arts department, art, music, and drama teachers casually offer assistance to each other when needed, but there is no project-based interaction. For example, visual arts instructors often help with set building for drama productions. Despite teaching independently of each other, occasional attempts to integrate with other departments are made. During the 2007-08 school year, for example, teachers and students in art I and those in the Shakespeare through performance and film class created masks together. The visual arts have provided products and creative support to the annual auction and for the advancement department. In 2008, students made valentines for the advancement office and lanterns for the auction party. The art department also supports the community service component of the school program by assisting in community service opportunities for students such as the Memory Project and by painting furniture for the Jackson County Humane Society fundraiser auction. While direct integration with other academic programs occurs less than departmental faculty would like, teachers continually strive to reach outside of the classroom and expose the greater school community to the arts by making the presence of student work visible on campus. Community art such as murals, art exhibitions (at school and in the community), and events such as the Arts Film Festival, visiting musical groups such as the Fireworks Ensemble, and all-school musical productions connect the department to the entire school. More direct integration between departments happens in seventh grade art, which is strongly correlated to the history curriculum. In addition, art room supplies are heavily used by the school, with many classes utilizing paint, paper, markers and colored pencils to create work in classes taught in other subject areas.

In music, a strong connection exists between the music program and the advancement department. Music students, most notably among them the upper school choir, provide musical support for many events. In recent years, music groups, for example, have been asked to perform for several school and public events, including a formal donor dinner at a private home, the Chinese New Year Festival in Jacksonville, the Providence Festival of Trees and Medford Winter Light Festival, St. Mary's School Grandparents Day, and the school's 140th Anniversary Celebration. The music department is also closely aligned with the liturgy and religion departments, providing cantors and a choir for Masses and prayer services.

Finally, one of the strongest integrations of the art department with other disciplines occurs between the art and the computer science departments in the 3D computer art and animation class. The 3D art course was designed and instituted with the knowledge and expectation that work done in the class could be ported into 3D or even 2D games written by programming students.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Distribution of human resources is made by the administration primarily according to the needs of the student body, and to a lesser degree, to the skills and areas of expertise of the available instructors. The administration takes into account in its decisions input and opinions from the department chair as well as that of other teachers and parents. The administration has also always been consistent in its efforts to maintain a low student-to-teacher ratio and to provide the resources necessary to maintain such a ratio.

Resources are thus determined by the administration, according to school needs based on scheduling and enrollment, but keeping faculty in their areas of expertise. Two full-time visual arts teachers, one full-time music teacher, and one full-time drama teacher mainly comprise the department. One 3D Max (computer modeling) class, an after-school chamber ensemble activity, and one sixth grade art class are taught by teachers outside the department.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

In visual arts, art materials are purchased by instructors, based on a yearly budget. The annual auction Wish Board gives the department the opportunity to solicit larger departmental needs (printing press, storage carts, clay roller, 3D Max licenses) as gifts from the parental and greater St. Mary's community. In drama, donations of set materials from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the copying of script material from Southern Oregon University library, and personal drama educational materials provided by the instructor largely supplement the limited drama department's educational materials such as scripts and books.

In the music department, the music teacher makes budget requests for all classes except for the after-school chamber ensemble. New equipment comes primarily from the Wish Board, but a number of parents have also chosen to donate musical instruments directly to the department. Each year, the music instructor orders a few new titles for each performing group. Because of the small size of instrumental groups, the vast majority of titles played by the jazz band and middle school orchestra are rearranged by the music teacher; scores are entered into the computer, and composition software is used to fit parts to available players, and is upgraded by the school biannually.

The spring musical budget is determined primarily by the artistic director, an outside professional. The budget saw a tremendous increase in 2006. Prior to that year, musicals were staged on campus in the multipurpose room—and for most of that time, the budget was purely determined by expected ticket revenues. In 2006, production was moved off-campus to give drama productions a higher profile. The school's advancement department works with a parent volunteer group, FAN Club, to secure donations to assist with expenses. The increased funding has allowed the school to rent rehearsal and performance facilities, costumes and props, and a variety of sound equipment. In addition, all orchestral musicians are now paid professionals; students no longer play in the "pit." Also, the production hires choreographers, set designers, musical directors, and the artistic director.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

Currently, the department is adequately funded. In order to keep up with the development of the school and the arts curriculum, the department has requested increased budgets to accommodate student growth and to purchase needed supplies and equipment.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

In terms of evaluation, the department does not have a set of formal evaluation procedures for the program. Anecdotal evidence in the form of community interest and the school's reputation seem to indicate that the program is succeeding, and the art program's involvement in competitions such as The Best of the Best regional art show, statewide competitions in music, and film/script writing contests provide an indication of the artistic excellence and success of individual students.

In music, assessment is calibrated with three types of students in mind: entry level students, students who have continued beyond the introductory level, and talented and gifted students who are exploring their potential more extensively. While there is a vertical curriculum in visual art, there is no sequence of classes in music and drama.

In addition, within the classroom, the fine arts program is vigilant in communicating with students on an individual level about their artistic progress. Students and teachers continually evaluate work in individual and group critiques, by means of written evaluations and rubrics. Students are evaluated on their art and their effort. In all classes, students are evaluated to a large extent on their participation and personal growth. Projects and objectives are given in all classes, and students are assessed according to whether projects are completed or objectives are met.

Lastly, the arts allow evaluation to occur by looking at the "whole child." Because students are not in an academic setting while in arts classes, they may be evaluated in different ways than they are in other classes. This allows arts classes to hold and boost morale for many students, whether or not they are achieving highly in other areas at St. Mary's.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

At St. Mary's School, fine arts teachers are professional artists as well as professional educators. Their involvement with their personal art endeavors amplifies and supports their classroom teaching. In the past two years, fine arts teachers have attended the following conferences: PNAIS, Oregon Arts Education Association, Southern Oregon Music Educators Association, and

The Educational Theater Association. They also have been involved with the Rogue Valley Chorale, Southern Oregon Repertory Singers, Rogue Opera, Pacem Choir, Middle Level Choral Instructor Training at the Oregon Bach Festival, Point Loma Actors Workshop, and the Thespian Society. Teachers have also received professional training through San Diego City College, Southern Oregon University, Teacher Institute in Contemporary Art at the Chicago Art Institute, and Tools for Teaching with Fred Jones, and they have been presenters for Art 21 and shown their personal artwork at galleries in the United States, as well as directed at the Black Swan Theater. Faculty members have received the following grants: Edison Grant for Curriculum Development, Picturing America Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, a Friends of International Charities Grant, and a Teacher Education Grant from the Oregon Council for Humanities.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The strengths of the fine arts department include enthusiastic, flexible teachers who act as mentors to students in their areas of professional expertise. Teachers strive to be current in the best practices in their disciplines and to continually improve the classroom experience for students, by attending teaching conferences, bringing in guest artists from the community and by promoting art experiences for the entire community. The department also has a no cut policy in all activities, allowing students to pursue artistic interests regardless of initial talent and/or skill.

In the area of weaknesses, the department needs to do a better job of communicating its goals and accomplishments to parties outside of the department (administration, other departments, and the community). We need a formal method of evaluating the program within the department and with the administration, including strategies to discuss concerns, address needs and evaluate large events, such as the musical, concerts, and tours. Finally, physical space for some classes is problematic.

These strengths and weaknesses were identified by the art department faculty in a series of discussions over the course of the 2007-08 school year, as a result of its writing of a formal strategic plan, and in conversations with members of the administration.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The school plans to continue to improve and expand Art Week, an event introduced in the spring of 2008. During the 2007-08 year, Art Week featured public art events around campus, life size plastic figures, field trips to art museum, guest speakers, and public relations for the arts, all with the goal of focusing on the positive aspects of making art, theatre, and music.

The department also plans to expand its support and publicity for *The Muse*, the school's arts and literature magazine, which showcases the best high school art and creative writing, in order to encourage student artists and bring attention to the department.

Finally, the department plans to revisit the art department's strategic plan each year to assess changes in needs and to recognize finished goals and accomplishments.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

Faculty members are practicing artists in their fields of expertise and closely connected to the local community. They keep abreast of the best practices in their fields.

Students enjoy their association with the department, through trips, performances, extra events, and because it gives them a time and place to make art.

The community benefits from the efforts of the department to produce activities that include all students.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school should continue to work to plan for future growth and to upgrade its facilities in order to meet the needs of the program.

The school should consider adding a music teacher for instrumental areas.

The school should continue to provide all-school musicals to allow the most student participation possible.

Foreign Languages

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Debora McCreedy (Chair), John Williams, Katie Salgado, Lisa Jones, Karin Watson, John Su, Katie Miller, and Lesley Klecan

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The Foreign Language Department in the upper school seeks to graduate students who can comfortably and proficiently speak, understand, read, and write about informal daily life in at least one foreign language. Basic competency in translating intermediate texts is a particular emphasis in Latin, but also an expectation in the living languages. More difficult to quantify, yet no less vital, is the desire to nurture an appreciation of the beauty and diversity of human culture and language and to cultivate tolerance for the diversity of expression and thought that enriches the world. Teachers strive to inspire all students to progress to the AP level.

In the middle school, the emphasis is on the process of acquiring a foreign language, as well as exposing students to the diversity of languages and cultures taught at St. Mary's. The introductory courses stress thematic vocabulary acquisition, focusing on simple, everyday expressions, as well as cultural literacy. With the exception of Latin in the seventh grade, there is little explicit grammar study at this level, and although all the middle school language courses introduce the concepts of verb conjugation and basic sentence structure, the information is presented in the context of real language projects that emphasize expression over accuracy. At this introductory level, teachers also endeavor to raise students' awareness of language and cultural borders.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The language department at St. Mary's is organized into middle and upper school divisions, but the groupings are unique in that the eighth graders are included in the upper school for foreign languages. Students must choose an initial language of study in the eighth grade and are required to complete at least two years of additional study during their upper school years. Under the current system, the majority of St. Mary's students complete three years of foreign language study. While the numbers vary from year to year, on average less than half of those who begin a chosen language continue all the way to the AP level, and far fewer choose to take the AP language exam.

In the middle school, sixth graders are required to take a survey course of three of the four languages taught at St. Mary's: a trimester each of German, Mandarin, and Spanish. These mini courses emphasize the essential skills and strategies for successful language acquisition, as well as promoting basic cultural literacy. In the seventh grade, students complete a semester of Latin, focusing on rudimentary grammar, basic translation skills, morphological and phonological analysis, and ancient Roman culture.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

It is the experience of the language department that students learn best when both the grammatical and thematic material builds on itself from year to year. A conscious effort is made to recycle and expand upon the vocabulary and grammatical concepts each year, giving students the opportunity to review familiar topics and concepts while improving the sophistication and accuracy of their listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Because St. Mary's teachers also agree that students learn best by wrestling with real language, they work to incorporate as many authentic texts, tapes, films, songs, radio plays, news casts, and videos as possible beginning no later than the third year. This emphasis on real language translates into a commitment to providing travel trips, as well as exchange programs. Such travel opportunities help St. Mary's language students to envision real life applications for their language skills. Living with host families and attending school with exchange partners builds language proficiency and cultural literacy on a scale that is difficult to achieve solely in the classroom.

The language department believes that students at the middle-school level benefit more from whole language experiences and thematic vocabulary study than from formal grammar instruction. Therefore, teachers avoid explicit instruction on syntax and rules in favor of thematic units and real language exposure. Short songs, poems, and performance opportunities take precedence over formal grammar instruction.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

We recognize that all students have diverse strengths, challenges, and interests, and teachers consequently vary their presentation of the material and methods of evaluating students' progress. However, it is our central belief that students learn best when they are immersed in the language of study. Thus teachers use the target language as much as possible, and beginning with the second year, students are increasingly encouraged to use the target language exclusively (the obvious exception being Latin). As classes are small, students have ample opportunities to speak and listen each day. Exposure to the language in the classroom is supplemented with small, regular doses of practice at home. Grammar is typically presented in context, and students are encouraged to deduce the syntactical patterns rather than to rely on the rote memorization and application of the rules. Finally, perhaps more than anywhere else in the curriculum, students are required to regularly take public risks when speaking a foreign language, and it is therefore incumbent on the teachers to provide a safe environment in which students can take those risks without fear of censure or failure and receive supportive, constructive feedback.

Because the middle-school language courses provide an introduction to language study that is meant to ignite students' interest in and passion for languages, teachers work to make them as engaging as possible. Teachers work to offer numerous opportunities for creative expression while breaking the language into smaller, more manageable units. Remaining in the target language as much as possible has to be balanced with the challenge of making the language accessible to all. Once again, small, regular doses of homework provide the practice necessary for mastery of the vocabulary, without overwhelming them with long lists or complicated translation.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Becoming proficient in a foreign language, as well as nurturing an appreciation for the cultures of our global neighbors are essential skills for any responsible global citizen, and the foreign language department strives to keep this focus central to its instruction. Students are encouraged to not only explore foreign cultures in the classroom, but also experience them first hand by participating in one of the many opportunities to travel abroad. Language courses strive to engage both the intellect and the affect of St. Mary's students, whether it is at the first year or AP level. Ironically, it is often in discovering a new culture that people come to know themselves best. Teachers realize that aspects of American life and democracy suddenly come alive when contrasted with foreign lifestyles or means of governing, and the faculty aspires to nurture a critical, yet appreciative eye on our local, national, and world environments. Specifically in Latin, with its exploration of the foundations of Western civilization, students learn what it meant to be a citizen in the Roman empire and how that has influenced the shape of American democracy.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

While students learn quickly that languages follow specific structures and rules to which speakers must adhere if they are to make themselves understood, they also discover that languages are very much living entities that continue to evolve and remake themselves, as do the cultures and mindsets of those who speak the languages. Instructors in the foreign language department strive to strike a balance between imparting the set structures and vocabulary necessary for proficiency in a particular language while still encouraging students to question, analyze, and evaluate both the language itself and the customs and viewpoints of the peoples they study. More specifically, language teachers cultivate a classroom atmosphere that is supportive and encouraging so students feel safe to risk inquiry and question why.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

In the lower division courses, there is little specific discussion of ethical issues, yet in exploring foreign cultures the conversation inevitably leads students to question why particular countries or peoples function the way they do. At these important junctures, teachers take time out of the curriculum to discuss either in English or in the target language the advantages and disadvantages of particular human behaviors. Recycling, military service, criminal justice, consumer responsibilities are just a few of the topics that come up in the first and second year courses. At the more advanced levels, many of the materials deal very specifically with ethical issues, especially when incorporating film into the curriculum. Whether it is analyzing the situation of a young, female Central American drug runner or the captain of a World War II German submarine, authentic materials invariably beg discussion and evaluation.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

It is difficult to imagine what aspect of language instruction does not fall under this umbrella. Even in the beginning courses, authentic materials are embedded in the classroom. Audio recordings, commercials, comic strips, guest speakers, films, radio plays, posters, games, and magazines all have their place and help to convey the perspectives and practices of the foreign culture. Through the student exchanges, the entire school community is enriched each year by the presence of foreign students, and St. Mary's students returning from any of the various travel trips offered each year bring with them first-hand experience with foreign cultures and languages. Perhaps equally important is the empathy they internalize for immigrants and non-native speakers living in the United States. Finally, by its very nature, the study of a foreign language offers a window not only on to the world's cultures, but perhaps just as importantly, unique insight into one's native culture and customs. Teachers in the foreign language department believe this self awareness is vital to building tolerance and respect for foreign languages and cultures.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

The use of technology varies greatly from teacher to teacher, yet certain basic equipment is broadly utilized. Compact Disc players, DVD players (both domestic and foreign), tape recorders, overhead projectors, and the computer lab are used quite uniformly in all the courses. Digital projectors for playing music or movie clips, as well as PowerPoint programs are also widely utilized. There is interest in utilizing podcasts more heavily, as well as formalizing the department's methodology and guidelines for online correcting. Several instructors have recently begun using internet programs paired with cell phone technology to make digital recordings of students' oral work, and there is also interest in working on a data bank of non language specific PowerPoint slide shows that could be used across the department curriculum. Finally, the Spanish instructors are exploring the possibility of adopting one of the many new online textbooks available.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

On the whole, integration of the middle and high school curricula with the modern languages taught at St. Mary's is incidental rather than conscious. History and culture are important aspects of all three modern languages offered, and there is overlap with both the high school and middle school social studies curriculum. However, there is no conscious effort to organize the material in conjunction with the scope and sequence of either the English or Social Studies. Both Chinese and Latin complement the sixth, seventh, and ninth grade history curricula, but again there is currently no explicit coordination between the two programs.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Until recently, the various languages were staffed by a single teacher who taught all levels—from introductory courses to the AP language classes. With increased student enrollment, full-time or

part-time faculty were hired to supplement the programs. Teachers currently teach five to six classes and have three to four preps. An effort is made to secure native or near native speakers for the advanced level instruction, and all other teachers have extensive in-country experience.

30.2: How are your particular program’s instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Faculty members teaching a specific language typically collaborate on the researching and adoption of any new textbooks, however instructors have also historically felt empowered to add or drop materials as they see fit, whether they are supplemental materials or main textbook selections. Teachers are urged to consider the financial burden placed on families when choosing a new text and required to show that the new materials significantly improve the quality of instruction. New equipment is generally secured either as a wish board item in the annual auction or requested and budgeted for at least a year in advance. The department has very limited discretionary funds for small purchases.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

In all honesty, due to many years of thrifty practice necessitated by numerous financial realities, St. Mary's as a whole and the language department in particular have developed the discipline of functioning on a very lean budget and practicing extreme fiscal responsibility. In many ways it is a habit that is difficult to shake, and the department has not requested any costly items in many years. Should the department discussions lead to a consensus that it needs particular equipment or materials, it will approach both avenues open to St. Mary's teachers: requesting the item as an auction item or budgeting for the item over the next few years.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students’ progress, learning, and development?

Teachers assess their students' success and progress in myriad explicit, as well as more informal ways. Written chapter and semester tests and regular quizzes still act as the key players in the formal assessments, but communicative activities, recitations, recordings, and projects also play an important role in assessing students' mastery and progress. Three of the four languages also administered their respective national exams until 2008, and there is ample annual data on the students' success in comparison to their peers. Finally, teachers receive feedback on their individual programs through signups for the individual languages, as well as for the various travel trips. The department does not administer any form of student evaluation of the various courses, and that is perhaps an area for scrutiny.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

Because each language is involved in offering student travel opportunities, all the foreign language instructors regularly spend time abroad living with families, interacting in schools, and overseeing student travel. In addition to these extensive travel programs, instructors have attended both language- and non-language related development opportunities. Instructors regularly attend AP Institutes, state wide language in-service seminars, and are active members of their College Board and language associations' list serves. One of the members of the Spanish department is currently enrolled in SOU's Masters of Arts in Teaching Program and recently spent the summer in Guanajuato, Mexico. The Mandarin program, as a new program, has been especially active with visits to the Chinese Language and Culture Institute in San Francisco, participation in the Chinese Bridge Program, and establishing the first Confucius Institute in an American high school. Members of the department have also attended Schools Attuned workshops, as well as life coach training.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The foreign language department is fortunate in the uniformly high proficiency of its teachers. All members of the department have spent extensive time abroad familiarizing themselves with the target culture and honing their language skills. The frequent travel trips offered by the department also serve to maintain teachers' cultural literacy and keep their speaking and listening skills current. Offering four foreign languages in a school of St. Mary's size means that classes rarely have more than 18 students, allowing teachers to individualize their instruction and offering students frequent opportunities for participation. Because the school leadership is sincerely committed to offering a challenging program, AP language courses are run even when student numbers are small, freeing teachers to concentrate on serving those who are truly interested and committed to the rigorous preparation required for success on the AP exam. Teachers also enjoy broad freedom in choosing their materials, planning their courses, and designing their programs.

The department also recognizes numerous areas for growth. While the department benefits from the wealth of experience of its teachers, there is also the temptation for instructors to fall into set teaching patterns, thereby missing out on opportunities for innovation or rejuvenation. Even when teachers are sincerely committed to staying abreast of new methodology and materials, planning and teaching numerous preps leaves little time for research and development. Collaboration, even among teachers of the same language, frequently becomes all but impossible, and programs that rely almost exclusively on one teacher are especially isolated. The responsibility of single handedly planning, leading, and maintaining travel programs often consumes any free time teachers might otherwise expend on innovation, collaboration, or travel to enrich their programs and deepen their personal mastery. This year's separation of the middle and upper schools' schedules has necessitated placing bilingual and experienced speakers in the first year Spanish classes, and this is an area that will have to be addressed for next year. It has also underscored our need for a placement test for our language programs to ensure that

students are adequately prepared or properly challenged when joining a St. Mary's language class. The department is also still searching for an accurate, objective assessment tool for the effectiveness and success of the language courses. Teachers have typically administered the respective national language exams but are not uniformly satisfied with the efficacy and reliability of the tests. Finally, the department needs to do a better job of informing its members of language and travel opportunities.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

Considering that until very recently the department consisted of a single teacher for each of the four languages, the program has significantly grown and now offers greater support and collegiality for its members. Currently, only Mandarin relies on a single teacher. With the continued growth of the school, the language department can expect that every department will expand to two full-time faculty, thus ensuring greater collaboration and the sharing of travel responsibilities. It is the hope of the department that once the monthly early release days are no longer monopolized by the self-study process, members can also plan on meeting as a department at least one a month to collaborate and share ideas. To better meet the needs of heritage and experienced Spanish speakers—not only in the eighth grade—the department has considered offering an early bird Spanish elective that will cater to their special strengths and address their specific challenges. The department will continue its search for an effective evaluation tool for its programs, as well as strive to better research and disseminate information on opportunities for professional growth and travel abroad.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The small classes allow the well trained, dedicated, and enthusiastic faculty to concentrate fully on delivering language instruction at the highest level.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

We need to do a better job communicating within the department, particularly between the middle and high schools, and we need to increase collaboration with other departments.

Mathematics

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Peter St. Onge (Chair), Chris Johnson, Naomi Lurie, Steve Martinich, Alan McCreedy, Sue Weaver, John Ward, and Tami Lohman.

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

Even though St. Mary's has two divisions, the math department is organized vertically and has two overarching goals. The first is mathematical literacy. Teachers aim to equip their students with a set of skills and conceptual understandings that will help them to be successful in high school, college, and work, and to prepare them to participate responsibly in the world. Teachers are also mindful of the fact that a certain base of mathematical knowledge is important for college-bound students and also that a variety of course offerings is important. This includes acknowledging the reality of high-stakes tests such as the SAT, and all courses in the upper school include a test-preparation component. From this emphasis on literacy, teachers help their students to develop confidence in their own mathematical abilities.

The second goal is to develop thinking skills or how to use mathematics as a tool to reason and solve problems and then express those ideas to others. At every level, from sixth grade through calculus, students learn problem-solving skills. In the middle school-level courses, the curricula emphasize developing pattern recognition skills and inductive reasoning. At the upper levels, the courses include more formal and deductive reasoning, with the explicit understanding that there are often multiple trains of thought and multiple approaches to a problem. The emphasis is not purely on computational skills, although the department considers the development of those to be very important. At each level, students apply and analyze the skills and ideas they've learned, evaluating the reasonableness of solutions and the veracity of arguments.

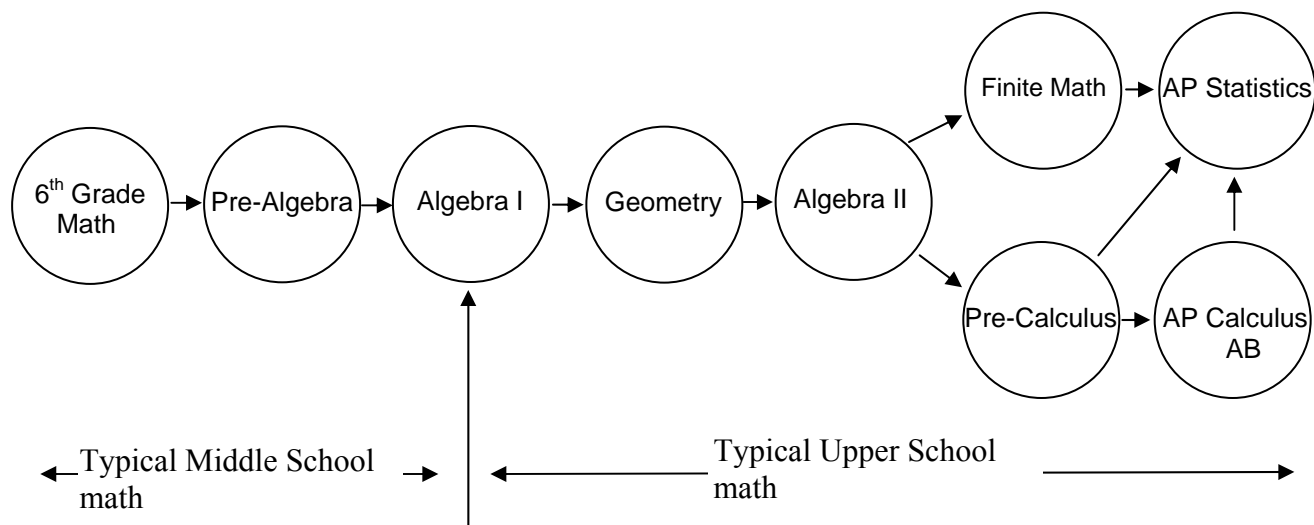
Mathematics is a discipline rich with history, and teachers take advantage of numerous opportunities in their classes to share some of that history with their students. Especially at the upper levels, teachers help their students to see the richness, beauty, and elegance inherent in pure mathematics.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

Even though St. Mary's has two divisions, the faculty views the math curriculum holistically and organizes it vertically, from sixth grade to senior year, in one department. In general, the program is designed on the principle of early introduction, repeated later reinforcement, and ultimate mastery of mathematical skills and concepts. For example, topics in probability are introduced in the sixth grade curriculum, reinforced in higher levels, greatly expanded upon and mastered in finite mathematics, and extensively applied in AP Statistics. As a second example, skills at solving systems of equations are first introduced at the pre-algebra/algebra I levels and then practiced and honed in algebra II. System solving is extended at the pre-calculus level to include non-linear systems. In finite mathematics, students learn to use matrix algebra and

graphing calculator technology to solve linear systems that are too large to be done using the simpler algebraic techniques. The concept of system solving is then extended to solve linear optimization problems using the Simplex Method.

The following is a pictorial depiction of the math sequence, with algebra I offered in both the middle and upper schools.



Algebra I, geometry, and algebra II are required courses. After algebra II, the student decides whether to pursue the pre-calculus and AP Calculus sequence, or the finite math and AP Statistics sequence. Students who take algebra II early as freshmen are expected to earn grades of “B” or better and go on to pre-calculus and AP Calculus. Students who do not earn a “B” or better are expected to retake algebra II (replacing the earlier grade with the new grade) and then chose to either pursue the pre-calculus or the finite math sequence. Students who take pre-calculus may elect to follow it with AP Statistics rather than AP Calculus. Students who finish AP Calculus as juniors (or earlier) are strongly encouraged (but not required) to continue their math studies by taking either AP Statistics or a special topics course. During the 2008-09 school year, in response to perceived weaknesses in the mathematics program, algebra II has been broken into two sections, algebra II, feeding into the finite math/AP Statistics stream, and algebra II+, feeding into the precalculus/AP Calculus stream (see section #31).

All graduating St. Mary’s students are required to complete four years of high school mathematics or complete an AP-level math class (either AP Calculus AB or AP Statistics). The goal is for all students to pass algebra II prior to graduation.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The St. Mary's Math Department does not operate under any one philosophy about learning, but informally incorporates an understanding of learning based on the experiences and training of all

the teachers in the department. Teachers feel that there are certain elements of learning that are applicable to the middle and upper schools, and they also recognize that students at different ages learn differently.

The faculty believes in the importance of sequential instruction and spiral curriculum design, allowing students to build on prior knowledge, establish a solid conceptual understanding, and to master a set of mathematical skills.

Teachers also view practice and application as an important element in learning. The department emphasizes homework as a basis for practicing what is learned in class and building a more solid understanding of concepts and skills. Teachers seek to enhance student learning through a variety of approaches, from skills-based to concept-based approaches.

Familiarity with the underlying structure and logic of the number system is thought to provide a basis for higher mathematical reasoning and abstraction. The curriculum avoids the use of calculators in lower-level courses (including all middle school courses) and only slowly introduces them in algebra II. The goal is to ensure that students master number skills and develop an intuitive understanding of the underlying logic and construction of the numbers they study. With their mastery of numerical skills, students also learn how to approximate numerical calculations and to recognize what constitutes a “reasonable” answer. Calculators are more thoroughly introduced in finite math, AP Statistics, pre-calculus and AP Calculus to facilitate complex calculations and to provide graphical representations of mathematical concepts.

In the middle school, students build concrete knowledge that supports their use of mathematics at a more abstract level. For example, students in sixth grade build rectangles and discover that each inscribed triangle takes up exactly half of the area of the original rectangle, setting the stage for the area formula for a triangle. Pre-algebra students first learn about probability through experiments in order to establish a firm conceptual understanding. The department has selected the Connected Math curriculum for these two courses, in part because of the strong focus on concrete experiences to help students build a flexible conceptual basis for abstract concepts.

The upper school curriculum is more deductive and works more sequentially to build the interconnected set of concepts and skills that characterize a traditional high school mathematics curriculum. The geometry curriculum is something of an exception. Based on the *Discovering Geometry* text, this course emphasizes inductive reasoning through investigation as a way of teaching reasoning and proof in a more broadly-accessible format.

29.3.b: Your particular program’s approaches to teaching?

The beliefs discussed above inform not only the design of the department, but pedagogy as well. In general, the math department does not impose a set of directives about pedagogy, but relies on the professionalism of its instructors to help students learn.

The faculty believes that students at different developmental stages learn differently. This differentiation is integrated and reflected in the differences in the curriculum in the middle school and upper school. In addition, teachers are expected to take the time necessary to

individually adjust for and provide tutoring for particular students and their needs. Small class sizes allows for doing this in a way that would not be possible with a larger student-teacher ratio.

Teachers also believe that there are different modes and types of learning, and that students benefit from seeing a concept or problem from different perspectives and approaches. In the upper school, this shows the internal cohesiveness of mathematics and is essential to providing students with an appreciation of the elegance and beauty of mathematics.

The faculty further believes that students learn best when their teachers show enthusiasm and interest in the subject material. Instructors are encouraged to bring their appreciation and enthusiasm for mathematics into the classroom, both in their attitude towards the curriculum and in their presentation of the material. St. Mary's encourages this enthusiasm through its emphasis on faculty evaluation through professional development.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

A fundamental tenant of the math department is that attaining a high level of mathematical literacy is necessary for students to become responsible local, national, and global citizens. From a practical perspective, the department's efforts are directed towards preparing students to succeed in college-level mathematics studies and future employment settings. In addition, the department's goals are to equip students with problem-solving strategies and critical thinking skills that will make it possible for them to analyze and interpret data, make appropriate inferences, and form conclusions about local, national, and global issues. Throughout this pursuit of literacy in mathematics, the math department remains committed to the ideals of intellectual curiosity and academic excellence. The department seeks an appropriate balance between academic rigor and accessibility in designing the mathematics curriculum.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The development of free and open inquiry is promoted via a two-vector approach.

The first vector is to promote a safe community and community etiquette so that students are free to ask questions and get the assistance they need to succeed. This behavior is especially promoted in the lower level classes in order to create a culture that will promulgate itself throughout the student's high school career.

In addition, the curriculum is oriented and taught in such a manner as to promote free and open inquiry. By its nature, mathematics is without ideological perspective, making its study an ideal vehicle for these qualities. Throughout their study of mathematics, students are encouraged to learn and master the important fundamental skills of mathematics, while simultaneously developing the ability to recognize and apply alternative approaches when attempting to solve mathematical problems. Problem sets and applications are selected and assigned to highlight important connections between mathematics and other disciplines such as science, economics, and business. It is intended that students recognize and understand the universal importance of

mathematics; its focus on unprejudiced logic, analysis, synthesis, and problem solving, all of which make it applicable to any field of study.

In the lower level courses, the concept-centered curriculum gives students a chance to observe, speculate, and derive the underpinnings behind math procedures and relationships. Students are encouraged to work through multiple ways of solving a problem based on real-world situations, to think openly, and ask questions. Students are taught to conjecture, test, discuss, verbalize, and make generalizations about patterns and relationships.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

Mathematics is, in general, ethically and morally neutral. It is a mental discipline that develops the tools of analysis, synthesis, problem solving, and logic. It is the application of these tools that falls under the purveyance of ethics. As a discipline that demands absolute integrity in logic and thought, mathematics provides a firm foundation in developing the tools of logical reasoning that help students respond appropriately to ethical dilemmas.

While mathematics itself does not provide a ready platform for the promotion of ethical development, the process of teaching does provide many such opportunities. Modeling hard work and compassion, demanding academic honesty, engaging the students with an attitude of respect, and providing appropriate rules, order and structure to a classroom and the classroom's etiquette are all ways to promote ethical development outside the strict context of mathematics itself. Students are given many opportunities to correct their work, retake exams, etc. so that they can improve as a result of their efforts; these experiences help them to develop a sense of accomplishment that is based on their own hard work and to develop a respect for the fruits of hard work.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

Mathematics is a discipline that pulls its logic and development from a variety of cultures and ethnicities. The department does not attempt to focus on any particularly culturally oriented mathematics. In keeping with the standards of the mathematics curriculum, the department develops those strands of mathematics that are internally consistent and cohesive with mathematics as a whole and which provide the scaffolding for continued learning of ever more advanced material. However, mathematics as a universal language of abstraction both provides for all cultures as well as transcends any one culture.

Application problems frequently look towards applying mathematics to situations that deal with multicultural or ethical issues such as literacy versus infant mortality. In addition, many of the textbooks provide historical and multicultural perspectives and teachers are free to bring this information into the curriculum. In particular, in the lower level courses, care is taken to use names and locations from a variety of cultures for example problems. The historical achievements in math in various cultures are discussed during topics of study. For example, while studying irrational numbers there are discussions of the approximations of π as used by the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Indians, and/or Greeks.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Technology is used in the department in a very deliberate and reasoned way. In particular the use of calculators is constrained in ways that is not common in the current public educational system. Calculators are not used until algebra II where they are mainly used to find the values of trigonometric functions and logarithms. In pre-calculus, some calculator use is employed for the same situations as in algebra II, with the addition of an introduction to equation solving. In AP Calculus there is a greatly increased use of calculators in consonance with the established AP Calculus curriculum. In both finite mathematics and AP Statistics, students learn to rely on the many features of their graphing calculators to aid them in analyzing, interpreting, and illustrating data. In these classes, an overhead view screen is used routinely as a teaching tool in order to present the proper use of the graphing calculator technology. In finite and AP Statistics, a computer is used to download and store data sets available on the web to be later transferred via electronic link to the students' graphing calculators. At the AP Statistics level, familiarity with the use of various statistics software (Fathom and Minitab) is developed.

Instructional technology such as software, overhead projectors, calculator overhead projectors, etc. are provided according to teacher request and curriculum need. For example, the geometry class uses Geometer's Sketchpad to assist students in developing their math skills and reasoning abilities. Microsoft Excel has also been used in some classes.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The math department's area of greatest integration is with the science department. Through informal discourses over the years, the math department has constructed its sequence to complement the science courses. As an example, studies of ratio, rate, and proportion in sixth grade and pre-algebra provide students the conceptual and skill background for unit conversion and data analysis in seventh- and eighth-grade science. In the upper school, freshmen students apply algebra skills extensively in their project-oriented physics class.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Distribution of human resources has been made by the administration mainly according to the needs of the student body, and to a smaller extent, to the skills and areas of expertise of the available instructors. When making decisions, the administration takes into account input and opinions from the department chair as well as other teachers and parents. The administration has always been consistent in its intent to maintain a low student to teacher ratio and has provided the resources to maintain this.

30.2: How are your particular program’s instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Most of the equipment and materials used in the instruction of mathematics is purchased using funds that are allocated to the department through the usual department budgeting process. This is true for pieces of technology like calculators, calculator overhead view screens, computer software, etc. More general instructional materials such as whiteboard pens, erasers, overhead transparencies, overhead pens, etc. are provided as part of the school's general operations and are not listed in the departmental budget. Occasionally, a big ticket item may end up being funded through a grant or as one of the annual auction's Wish Board items.

Textbooks are selected by a committee of mathematics teachers. This committee usually consists of (but is not limited to) teachers who teach the particular level of mathematics for which the textbook is intended. This committee does a thorough and comprehensive survey of the texts currently available. Textbooks are judged on how well they match up with the department's curriculum scope and sequence, the clarity of presentation, the level of rigor in the problem sets, and how closely the book meshes with departmental philosophy. For instance, for all levels of mathematics up to algebra II, a deliberate attempt is made to find textbooks that present problems sets that can be worked without the use of electronic calculators.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

With the exception of human personnel, this has not occurred. All budget requests have been met by the administration.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students’ progress, learning, and development?

Daily homework is routinely assigned in all mathematics courses taught at St. Mary's. In addition, frequent quizzes, chapter tests, and cumulative projects provide important feedback on how well students are picking up the skills and concepts presented in the course. More comprehensive exams at the end of each unit and then at the close of each semester are often used to judge how well students retain material that was presented earlier in the year. Smaller class size also allows for more personal familiarity with the individual student’s success. A narrative statement on progress reports for each student requires teacher awareness of how each student is doing in the classroom.

In addition to these commonly used teacher-generated assessment vehicles, school-wide standardized tests are also administered to provide objective feedback on our students' mathematical abilities. Currently, all St. Mary's students take the PSAT (ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades), the ISA (eighth and tenth grades), and the Stanford Achievement Test (sixth,

seventh, and eighth grades). All of these tests provide detailed reports to the school describing particular strengths and weaknesses in terms of our students' abilities in mathematics.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

St. Mary's uses professional development as an essential part of its Meaningful Faculty Evaluation process. Each teacher is involved in professional development on a yearly basis. Examples of the types of development that have been engaged in are: courses at Southern Oregon University, PNAIS All School's Conference in 2007, All Kinds of Minds (2007), State of Jefferson Math Conference (2007), Fred Jones: Tools for Teaching, and a Geometer's Sketchpad training course. In addition, the administration provides funds for individually pursued development, such as the purchase of professional literature whether pedagogically- or content-oriented.

Because development is individually pursued, it does not result in overall departmental changes. Instead, changes are dependent on incorporation by the individual instructors as they find it advantageous and appropriate.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

Weaknesses:

The department needs to develop a formalized, studied, scope and sequence. The current algebra II curriculum also does not meet the needs of all upper school students. The course is not sectioned by student ability or interest, so very strong students who intend to take pre-calculus are in the same section with students who simply need to meet the algebra II graduation requirement. The level and pace of the current curriculum is focused on the former to the detriment of the latter. During the 2008-09 academic year, St. Mary's School has decided to offer two levels of algebra II in order to address this issue.

Strengths:

Small class sizes and student-to-teacher ratios allows for many strengths: more time working with students on an individual basis, the ability to provide tailored assignments, the opportunity to better get to know each student's strengths and weaknesses, and personal contact with the parents of the students. St. Mary's School also requires that students take math each year in high school (or until completion of an AP math course).

St. Mary's teachers have always demonstrated a strong commitment to their students and subject area.

St. Mary's has demonstrated success in student learning. Standardized tests such as the SAT, consistently show higher than national and even international standing. In our first

administration of the ISA, the class of 2009 (as sophomores) tested far above the PISA levels of 41 countries, including all members of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. In fact, the middle 90 percent of St. Mary's student scores exceeded the mean PISA score for each country listed. AP tests also show excellent student accomplishment in higher mathematics. The St. Mary's Math League also consistently scores very high in competitions.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

A scope and sequence report and curriculum review will commence in spring of 2008 and continue in fall of 2008. The curriculum maps entered into the Atlas Curriculum Mapping program will be used to help generate a formalized scope and sequence.

The department will also appoint a committee to explore alternatives to the status quo. The administration considers this a top priority. It is the intent of the department to have a two-level algebra II curriculum for the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

• **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

Small class size and student-to-teacher ratio allows for many strengths: more time working with students on an individual basis, the ability to provide tailored assignments, the opportunity to better get to know each student's strengths and weaknesses, and personal contact with the parents of the students. St. Mary's has demonstrated success in student learning. Standardized tests consistently show higher than national and even international standing. Advanced Placement tests also show excellent student accomplishment in higher mathematics.

• **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

Scope and sequence report and curriculum review will commence in spring of 2008 and continue in fall of 2008. The curriculum maps entered into the Atlas Curriculum Mapping program will be used to help generate a formalized scope and sequence. Various options are being considered for making sure that all students at St. Mary's can achieve the level of Algebra II in their math studies. A committee will be formed to look for the most optimal solutions to this difficulty.

Religion

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The religion department's goals include explaining the Catholic faith, teaching tolerance and acceptance of others' faiths, and strengthening and clarifying belief. Additionally, teachers strive to inspire students to explore religious faith, to search for their own spirituality, to examine the role religion plays in their lives, and to serve others. Teachers also recognize that students are at various stages of their faith development and attempt to support them on their spiritual journeys.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

In the sixth through tenth grades the program features a required core set of classes. In the sixth grade, students explore the school's mission statement and receive an introduction to Catholic Christianity. In the seventh grade, they explore Hebrew Scriptures. In the eighth grade, students examine personal spirituality and Church teaching. Ninth grade students explore the history of the early Church, and tenth grade students examine world religions. In the eleventh and twelfth grades, students select four of the following five semester-long, topical electives: moral theology, scripture studies, Christology, social justice, and Catholic literature.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

Teachers in the program recognize that it takes time to develop higher level thinking skills. In the middle school, learning is based on a variety of developmentally appropriate activities. In the sixth grade, for instance, students memorize and recite Psalms and learn about the liturgical calendar. In the seventh grade, students examine key elements of the Hebrew Scriptures including the story of Genesis, the Mosaic Code, and the Patriarchs. In the eighth grade, students explore their personal faith by keeping journals and discussing the foundations of Christianity and modern moral dilemmas. In the ninth and tenth grades, students perform higher-level abstract thinking tasks, utilizing primary sources and novels to supplement material from the textbooks. Students in the ninth grade, for example, are asked to apply their knowledge by connecting the experiences of the early Christians to their own lives. In the tenth grade, students explore and juxtapose the core beliefs of the world's major faiths. In the eleventh and twelfth grades, higher level reflection is expected in primarily discussion-based classes, and students write essays and keep journals as they strive to formulate and to intelligently articulate culturally sensitive world views. The culmination of the program is the senior project, an individual seven-to ten-page research and reflective essay on each student's community service experience. The paper is followed by a panel presentation involving school personnel and community members. Symbolizing the value that the school places on service, high marks on the project are rewarded with a purple cord at graduation.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Religion classes strive to convey the richness of the Catholic intellectual and spiritual tradition and to convey respect for people of all faiths and cultures. Classes build an ambience of respect as students explore personal beliefs and various faiths through Socratic discussion. Open-ended questioning is favored in the classroom, and courses encourage students to model exemplars of all faiths, according to the dictum that we are all our brothers' keepers. In all classes Catholic and democratic values are promoted, and students of all faiths are welcome and encouraged to share their views. The mission's emphasis on intellectual curiosity and responsible citizenship are displayed in all religion classes, especially in world religions, through students' 100 hours of community service in order to graduate, and with students' senior projects.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

While religion class is required each year for St. Mary's students, the department believes that true exploration of faith can only take place in an environment of free and open inquiry, where students are exposed to a variety of texts and faiths, encouraged to reflect on them, and make their own decisions about their faith development. The school does not seek to proselytize, but recognizes that all people are children of God.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The study of religion intrinsically involves the exploration of moral and ethical questions. In moral theology class for example, students study types of moral and logical reasoning and examine a variety of perspectives in order to help them develop the tools to reason morally and effectively. Students are also asked to defend various ethical positions and to examine how information shapes ethical values, hence their responsibility to make sure that that information is substantive, multifaceted, and valid. A culminating project for students in the class is a position paper on ten specific moral issues.

Ethical reasoning is taught in other religion classes as well. In Hebrew Scriptures, students study the Ten Commandments. In World Religions, they examine the key tenets of various faiths and the moral strictures and consequences they impose on people. And in Catholic Literature class, students examine the moral ideas and transcendent values of the teachings of Boethius, Augustine, Thomas More, and Erasmus.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

Diversity is reflected in all religion classes in terms of both the curriculum and variety of perspectives shared. Sources range widely, and teachers and students draw on a variety of perspectives and sources as they explore topics. The school's diverse student body, and its global curriculum that includes courses such as world religions, also reflect its multicultural orientation and the value that it places on diversity and our common humanity.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Aside from films (DVD and VHS) not a great deal of technology is used within the religion department. Students do make use of the EBSCO Host data base to research projects such as their Christology exemplar paper and senior project, however the use of technology within the department is limited.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

Religion is integrated with other departments in a variety of ways, and the curriculum between the sixth and tenth grades involves some degree of horizontal integration with English and history. In the seventh grade, students study the founding of the Catholic Church while in history they explore Europe during the Middle Ages. In eighth grade, students study human rights and the *Declaration of Independence*. In ninth grade, students in religion class examine the early Church while they study ancient history, and tenth grade world religions horizontally integrates with world literature in English and the study of human geography in social studies. Significant connections between the service and liturgy programs may also be found.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

First and foremost, religion department teachers must be Catholic. The scheduling of middle and upper school classes, assignments of multi-division teachers, and class sizes also play a part in the distribution of human resources within the religion department. Two lead administrators teach in this department, indicating the scarcity of human resources available.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

The department has an annual budget, and teachers find, order, and obtain materials that are appropriate for their classes. Wish board donations are acquired for larger items (e.g. class sets of Bibles, DVD series, and Bible carts). Texts are researched by individual teachers and the department head and examined for grade level appropriateness, mission applicability, and content. The school primarily uses Catholic publishers for principal texts and Bibles.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

Finding qualified religion teachers has been an issue at times in the history of the school. The head of school, department chair, and individual teachers are continually on the lookout for Catholic faculty candidates in such places as the local parish, the National Catholic Educational

Association website, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy website, and Catholic universities.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

Although a formal process is not in place, some teachers use course evaluations at the end of the semester. Reflections during in-class journal writing, comments in seniors' college application essays, or on students' reflective community service projects all provide feedback about the curriculum. The experiences of alumni who have devoted themselves to various humanitarian non-profit organizations also provide information about the effectiveness of the program.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

The religion faculty have engaged in a variety of community service opportunities in the past two years. These include attending the annual Archdiocese of Portland in-service conference, the annual Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education conference, Portland Catholic School Principals meetings, and bi-annual Archdiocesan department heads meetings and in-service planning sessions. Faculty members have also attended local parish Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults classes and toured Catholic and Christian colleges and universities.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The strengths of the department are numerous. They include an environment of collegiality where discussions concerning the program are encouraged; the tremendous breadth of coverage of the curriculum; the spirit of ecumenism that permeates classes; the experiential component of many classes which involve field trips, quest speakers, and service projects; the strong connection between the curriculum and the community service program; and the active membership of faculty in their faith communities.

Weaknesses include the shortage of available faculty to meet the needs of the school as it grows; the difficulty in finding qualified faculty of a suitable theological background; the lack of an adequate, formal mechanism to evaluate courses; the desire for greater connectivity with local parishes in the valley; and the sequencing of religion classes in the middle school which might be changed to improve the integration with history and English.

These strengths and weaknesses were identified by faculty during a series of meetings throughout the 2007-08 school year.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The school is examining various schedule options to help alleviate the shortage of approved religion instructors and to increase the variety of class offerings. The school is also working to improve its relations with local parishes by inviting priests from each parish to celebrate at least one liturgy annually on campus. The school also plans to explore the sequencing of religion classes in the middle school to improve horizontal integration with English and history.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The religion program is an integral part of the school's mission and synthesizes Catholic and democratic values to a laudable extent. It also encourages the values of responsibility and citizenship through its promotion of good works and thoughtful inquiry. Religion teachers also foster an understanding among students that we are all servant leaders responsible to our fellow human beings and that we should be responsible stewards of God's creation.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school plans to explore various course scheduling and sequencing options to enhance the program's effectiveness.

Science

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Jerry Burke (Chair), Paula Stenberg, Rebecca Lovett, Holly Bense, Katie Miller, and Lia Kirkpatrick.

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The science department at St. Mary's School has a number of goals and objectives.

- 1) **Goal: Continuity between the sciences: Physics, Chemistry, Biology (or Biological and Physical Sciences).** The sciences are interdependent and divisions between them are subjective. We teach them separately, although students need to understand the interconnectedness between them through modeling by instructors who value these separate yet connected disciplines.
 - a) Show the hierarchical nature of science.
 - i) in Biology and Chemistry, demonstrate and integrate the physical concepts of energy and thermodynamics.
 - ii) in AP Biology, apply reduction-oxidation during the metabolism and cellular respiration unit.
 - b) Build on previous courses
 - i) High school biology course builds on 7th grade life science and 8th grade human biology.
 - ii) High school Anatomy & Physiology courses builds on biology, chemistry and eighth grade Science
 - iii) High school chemistry builds on 8th grade pre-chemistry
 - iv) High school astronomy and geology builds on 6th grade Earth science.
- 2) **Goal: Familiarity with the Natural World** and integration into science class. Everything we study in science, whether the physical or biological sciences, has a link to nature.
 - a) Wherever possible, show the link to the natural world.
 - i) In 6th grade science, study of volcanism and rocks; visit and study Crater Lake National Park and Lava Beds National Monument
 - ii) In Life Science, study invasive species such as Yellow star thistle.
 - iii) In Life Science, study habitat and biomes and work on riparian restoration of Larson Creek.
 - iv) In Physics, study waves, sound, and light.
 - v) In Biology, study cells, observe a variety of cell types.
 - vi) In Chemistry, study acids and bases and note where they occur in nature.
- 3) **Goal: Learn key concepts and principles.** Each science discipline has identified concepts and themes. These are those basic ideas that have been identified as necessary for an understanding of that particular discipline. They can be found in the Curriculum Map.
- 4) **Goal: Continuity between Science, Mathematics, Technology, and Society.** Science is a human endeavor that takes place within a human culture and is dependent upon social mores and current technology.

- a) Science is taught within a social and historical context.
 - i) In biology, ethical issues are discussed in the genetics and molecular biology unit.
 - ii) In physics, siege videos and the middle-ages provide the context for projectile motion and the Trebuchet Project.
 - iii) In middle school life science, students learn the impact of recycling and the use of resources in the home as part of a global footprint.
 - b) Science is dependent upon mathematics.
 - i) Across the sciences, students use statistical analysis to interpret data and test hypotheses.
 - ii) In biology, students apply Hardy-Weinberg Equilibrium to population samples and statistically analyze fruit fly data collected over three generations.
 - c) Science is dependent upon technology.
 - i) In Biology, DNA electrophoresis equipment is used to demonstrate C.S.I. technology.
 - ii) Later, students transform *Escherichia coli* with a jellyfish gene.
 - iii) In Chemistry, students make perfume using micro-reflux glassware.
 - iv) In middle school Life Science, students use Hach Kits and computer data interfaces to collect stream chemistry data.
- 5) **Goal: Historical context** of science. Science ideas develop over time.
- a) Students learn what a model (theory) is and how they are useful. Models are the goal of science, useful for explaining observations, for making predictions, and guiding experiments.
 - (1) In Biology, students learn that evolution is the thread that ties together the rest of biology.
 - b) Students learn that models change as new information is learned.
 - i) In Biology, students learn about the development of the cell membrane. That models are developed as a way to explain experiments, and what is observed. Later, models evolve to accommodate new facts.
 - ii) In Physics, students learn that motion can be explained using Newton's Theory of Motion, but that later models replaced Newton's in a paradigm shift as more experiments were performed.
 - iii) In Chemistry and 8th grade Pre-chemistry, students learn the history of atomic structure and sub-microscopic particle theory.
 - iv) In middle school Life Science, students collaboratively study the history of ocean exploration and oceanography.
- 6) **Goal : Students learn to think critically and scientifically.** There are many valid ways to think about and find meaning in the world. In science, we challenge students to distinguish between science and pseudoscience.
- a) The scientific method:
 - i) Students learn to identify bias in their experiments and in the popular media.
 - ii) Students are given opportunities to think logically and point out logic flaws.
 - b) The limits of science:
 - i) Students will learn that science is concerned with observable and measurable phenomena.
 - ii) Students will learn that hypotheses must be testable and falsifiable.
- 7) **Goal : Students will learn the scientific method and be able to design an experiment.**

- i) Students will learn the parts of an experiment: identify cause and effect; keep variables constant for fairness and to avoid confounds, and identify and limit bias.
 - ii) Students will learn how to collect and report data.
 - iii) Students will learn how to transform data with calculations and graphs.
 - iv) Students will learn how to link cause and effect, draw conclusions, and evaluate the experiment.
- 8) **Goal : Students will learn that change occurs in the natural world, resulting in great diversity, but that there is also continuity.**
- i) In the biological sciences, students study evolution as a major theme that ties many concepts together and results in the great diversity of life yet links all life together.
 - ii) In Astronomy, students will learn the Hertzsprung-Russell classification system of stars.
 - iii) In Geology, students learn about the rock cycle, continental drift, and the dynamic Earth.
 - iv) In Life Science, students study biogeochemical cycles.
 - v) In Biology, students learn sources of variation that contribute to genetic diversity.
- 9) **Goal : To make the physical sciences more available to all students.** Physics, and chemistry to a lesser extent, is often thought of as an elitist class in senior high. We would like to make it available to all students. To do this, we moved physics to a required 9th grade science course, and teach it conceptually to accommodate students from all math backgrounds. We continue to work on making Advanced Placement Physics available as student interest demands.
- 10) **Goal : Engaging young women in science and science careers.**
- a) Model science as a career choice. Most of our science teachers are women, and two have doctoral degrees in their field.
 - i) In middle school, girls have an opportunity to participate in the symposium, Advocates for Women in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics (AWSEM).
 - b) Students are given opportunities to work on physics-related projects.
 - i) In Physics, students build trebuchets and groups compete on a variety of criteria.
 - ii) In Astronomy, and in the Astronomy Club, students have an opportunity to work on GAVRT.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

In sixth through eighth grades, St. Mary's students study earth science, life science, and take basic chemistry and human biology courses. These are required courses. In the upper school, most students start with physics, then progress to biology and chemistry in the tenth and eleventh grades, respectively. These three years complete the minimum requirement for science at St. Mary's. Most students, however, go on to take a college-level course as an elective, and many double up during their ninth and tenth grade years so that they can take more advanced science courses later. The department offers three Advanced Placement science courses (biology, chemistry, and physics), and also an anatomy & physiology course as well as semester-long courses in astronomy and geology. Students have the option of completing the astronomy and geology courses in lieu of the more math-rigorous chemistry.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

Science faculty members hold a number of beliefs about how students learn that influence the design of the program and approaches to teaching

First, the department believes that students learn through inquiry, which requires flexible scheduling that allows time to design and perform a laboratory. Because of time considerations, student needs and learning styles, and the amount of time it takes to put together an inquiry laboratory, middle school students have more opportunities to pursue this style of lab work. In life science, for example, students spend weeks putting together inquiry activities such as studying local noxious weeds and collecting data on resources used in the home. In the upper school, one or two inquiry labs are performed per semester.

Second, the science faculty believes that students learn when they have a need to know, when the subject matter is useful to their own lives or has value and is relevant. Our curriculum recognizes student attitudes and values and speaks to them. The department thus invites guest speakers to discuss their research and careers and to engage with students' own aspirations.

Relevancy of science content is an especially important consideration in upper school where students are beginning to make decisions about college and careers. Additionally, a strong scientific background is necessary to understand advances reported in the media (recent strides made in stem cell technology, cloning, and genetic engineering are a few examples in molecular biology). In middle school, the science curriculum is made relevant with such topics as CPR and First Aid certification.

Third, science teachers believe that students learn by measuring, and collecting and analyzing data. Teachers thus seek to provide the facilities, opportunities, and technology for students to collect and analyze data. This area is equally important in the upper and middle schools. Consequently, many opportunities are given to students to use measuring and data collection equipment.

The science faculty also believes that students learn through factual mastery, which teachers seek to develop by requiring note taking in classroom lectures, the maintenance of graphic organizers (concept maps, diagrams and flow charts), making notes from the textbook, answering problem-solving questions at the end of each unit, and completing a variety of assessments, including multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Instruction is also tailored to the developmental needs of students. Instruction is more lecture-based in the upper school where students must learn and be able to manipulate a large amount of information. In middle school, lectures are shorter and interspersed with more student-centered activities.

Science teachers also believe that students learn by being creative. Science teachers thus engage students in numerous creative activities, including singing biology songs, keeping journals,

making mnemonic devices, devising analogies, performing drama, creating lab demonstrations, sketching, building models (conceptual and physical), designing inquiry-based labs, making demonstrations (PowerPoint, Excel), participating in group projects, and completing open-ended assignments with students given choices based on their learning style. Creativity is limited only by the teacher. Science teachers in upper and middle school thus use a variety of techniques to motivate students, reach all learning styles, and keep learning fun.

In addition to holding the aforementioned beliefs, science teachers also consider the different learning styles of students and believe that their understanding must be assessed in a variety of ways, including by using the Socratic method of asking rather than telling; and scaffolding students' knowledge; requiring oral exams; having students demonstrate skills (like a microscope or balance); challenging them with traditional tests and quizzes, written homework, and reading assignments; encouraging them to compose self-directed concept maps; giving them lab practicum examinations; and requiring lab write-ups, research-oriented projects, and papers that are subject-based, current events inspired, and/or geared to finding bias in research. Upper and middle school science teachers recognize that students are unique and learn best when faculty members teach to their strengths.

Science teachers further believe that students need opportunities to develop skills in the following areas: measurement, use of lab equipment (microscope, balance, glassware, ecology data collection), use of technology (computers and software, data interfaces), lab routine (write-up, experimental design such as variable control and hypothesis testing, and safety), and data handling (collection, transformation and manipulation, display and presentation).

In the middle school, many students are exposed to a variety of equipment for the first time. Furthermore, they are developing graphing and other data transformation skills. Oftentimes, the focus is on safety and the proper use of the apparatus. In the upper school, students are further developing these skills and using equipment with greater precision (balances in chemistry, precision micropipettes in biology, and a variety of data collection devices in physics).

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Science teachers value curiosity as an important trait of a scientist. Laboratories and activities designed to expose students to discrepant events trigger curiosity and a need to learn concepts. Teachers have high expectations for academic excellence at all levels, and plan lessons to meet the needs of our talented students while not losing our struggling students. As often as possible, our students are given a voice in the direction of their classes. For example, teachers schedule tests and big homework assignments in a manner to ease student loads, and they solicit class input on these dates. Furthermore, students are encouraged to voice concerns and pick topics of research (within parameters) that they wish to pursue. Many assignments and projects integrate local choices or behavior with global concerns. An example of this emphasis is the home resources project in seventh grade. Students collect data related to resources use in their homes and relate their consumption to that of people in other countries as a means of calculating their relative global footprint.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The science curriculum is rich with examples of inquiry activities that allow students to pick their own research topics or design certain parts of experiments (such as choosing the independent variable in a microbiology experiment).

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

Most science courses incorporate links to ethical issues. Although teachers do not preach, students are encouraged to look at the sides of an issue and make choices in their lives. In the middle school, students learn about the tragedy of the commons related to ocean fishing. They have opportunities to practice environmental restoration at Larson Creek which runs through our campus. In their eighth grade human biology and health courses, they learn about sexually transmitted diseases. In upper school biology, students learn about cloning and genetic research. In chemistry, students receive instruction on environmental issues related to pollution and chemistry. Teachers also promote and expect ethical behavior in our classrooms in regard to testing behavior and written assignments. When necessary, students are counseled against cheating and plagiarism.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

On the whole, science is blind to perspectives of race, culture, and gender and is an equal opportunity study. Furthermore, most of the school's science teachers are women, providing strong role models for their students. Certainly, scientists from some minority groups who make important contributions are sprinkled throughout the curriculum (Marie Curie in chemistry, Rosalind Franklin and Arthur Kornberg in biology). In seventh and eighth grade, girls are given an opportunity to participate in the AWSEM Symposium, Advocates for Women in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics and have the opportunity to interact with women in science fields, doing science labs and hearing speakers.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Most of our technology falls under the categories of low tech or high tech. Low tech includes the various mundane but necessary laboratory equipment such as glassware (beakers, graduated cylinders, etc.), mass scales, microscopes, dissection equipment, centrifuges, etc. For the most part, these are not listed here. Other more unusual low tech items such as specialty reagents, special glassware, or lab protocols, are listed in this document. High tech listed here refers to more specialized equipment used in our science classes.

The middle school science classes use a variety of software applications and websites for handling data, presenting information, and researching. Additionally, students use various chemistry and life sciences equipment, but for the most part, there is little focus on technology. Rather, the focus at this level is more on hands-on inquiries, reading, and group work.

Upper school students use a variety of technology across the various classes. One of the projects in physics and astronomy classes is Jupiter Quest. This is a student research project in conjunction with Goldstone Apple Valley Radio Telescope (GAVRT). Students use the computers to operate and collect data from a radio telescope. The projects are in partnership with NASA/JPL. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration funds the operation and technological aspects of the program. This limits many of the problems regarding its use. Today, many of the problems have been resolved. Most issues arise from problems external to the GAVRT program. These issues range from bad weather to Internet problems between the school and Apple Valley, California. In sophomore biology classes, a number of websites are used for examples of karyotypes and pedigrees, and to show important historical experiments such as Hershey-Chase, Meselson-Stahl, RNAi, etc. Animations to demonstrate cells, DNA replication, protein synthesis, and natural selection are also used.

High technology is used for a number of laboratory investigations. Students have opportunities to perform a Protein Fingerprint (Protein Separation), DNA digestion using EcoRI and HindIII endonucleases, DNA gel electrophoresis, and blood typing using student blood samples and ABO/Rh antibodies. Students also perform stream chemistry (Hach) to determine nitrates, dissolved oxygen, pH, turbidity, and they also incorporate Pasco computer data collection interfaces and DataStudio software. In A.P. Biology, mathematical models are used to determine Hardy-Weinberg Equilibrium, and Chi Square analysis is performed. Titration burets are used to determine enzyme activity and substrate concentration. Additionally, students use a spectrophotometer to determine photosynthesis rates, respirometers to measure respiration rates in germinating seeds, and sphygmomanometers and stethoscopes to measure heart rate and blood pressure. Human anatomy and physiology students build muscles on a manikin with the assistance of Internet-based computerized images (such as *Physio-X* and *Adam*) of muscles. They view websites to illustrate physiological processes of each major body system, and use medical examination equipment to collect physiological data. In chemistry, students use molecular-modeling software to visualize and manipulate molecules in three dimensions. Additionally, they use microscale distillation equipment for organic chemistry labs, and perform titrations to determine molar concentrations of acids and bases. Spectrum tubes are also used to view specific line emission spectra of various gases, and a hydrometer to study gas laws and volume of a gas.

Obvious software challenges include computer limitations. There are more computers available now in each classroom than ever before. Unfortunately, it can be a challenge to switch between Microsoft Windows 2000 and XL. Some computers run QuickTime, others Windows Media Player, while some computers may or may not run Java animations. Additionally, students may bring a PowerPoint presentation created at home only to find it does not work with our version 9.0.2716. Because class sizes are generally small (less than 20 students), there is usually enough equipment to go around and to serve lab groups of two to three students each. In some cases, however, students may have to wait their turn to use the spectrophotometer, or the precision digital scale. But this only leads to better sharing and cooperation between students.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

With mathematics courses:

Integration of mathematics abounds in science classes. In middle school, students develop their arithmetic skills and begin to learn more abstract algebra. These skills are applied in formulas used in data transformations and in graphing. Eighth graders apply algebra skills to radioactive decay curves. Students begin to learn how to identify variables and other experimental design parameters.

In upper school, students continue and extend these applications. Use of algebra and trigonometry occurs in chemistry and physics. In advanced biology, students use Chi Square analysis to test hypotheses in a fruit fly lab. They also use semi-log graph paper to plot DNA migration in electrophoresis gels in order to determine DNA fragment size. In AP Chemistry, students use calculus skills such as derivatives.

With English courses:

Reading and writing: In all classes at all levels, students are given the opportunity to read and write using proper grammar and following MLA writing style. Students are taught techniques on how to study specific to a lesson. They may, for example, be given specific ideas on how to take notes for a certain lesson or how to prepare for an assessment. Creative writing is also important at all levels of science, but especially in middle school science classes. In addition, giving credit to sources is important at all levels in science, but especially in upper school science classes, as students are expected to include bibliographies in their papers. Note-taking is especially important in advanced high school science classes that become more lecture-based in content.

Presentations: Presenting information to the class occurs at all levels and disciplines in the science curriculum. Students present information through posters, PowerPoint, speeches, and video, to name just a few.

Critical thinking: In high school especially, students are given opportunities to read critically and look for bias in library research (especially the Internet) and popular media.

With humanities courses:

Students have a number of opportunities to integrate their science studies with humanities and the greater community. In middle school, students perform a Home Resources Project and collect data on the amount of resources they use at home. They learn about garbage disposal and recycling from speakers from Rogue Disposal and Recycling. Middle-school students also participate in an extensive riparian restoration activity at Larson Creek which borders the school's property. Himalayan blackberries and other noxious weeds have been removed and replaced by native trees and shrubs. This work is funded and supported with help from various local and state government organizations. Recycling (as well as reducing and reusing) are topics that most of the science teachers practice in their classrooms. Most classrooms have paper recycling bags as well as boxes for recycling plastic bottles.

In upper school, more creek opportunities are in place. Biology students raise in the classroom juvenile Chinook salmon, a species proposed for threatened status in many watersheds. Other riparian studies, from water chemistry and macro-invertebrate identification to riparian plant identification, take place. Students are shown the science and given the opportunity to relate it to their local community.

In upper school biology, ethics is sprinkled throughout the course in class discussions of genetic engineering, stem cell research, and cloning. In chemistry, students discuss laws enacted in California to reduce energy consumption in lighting and automobile fuel efficiency and emissions. Every couple of years, the school organizes and hosts a Global Solutions Day conference. Many of the themes from the last conference related to a scientific field: caring for patients in a Ghanaian hospital, creating a mobile marsh in a trailer to purify water, producing bio-fuels, agriculture, and habitat destruction leading to species extinction.

With history courses:

The history of various science models and theories is taught at all levels. This is expanded on in 29.1 goals and objectives. In middle school, the life science curriculum is integrated closely with the history curriculum. When students are studying the marine biome in science, they are studying explorers, shipping, and mapping in history. In middle school and upper school, students study the history of numerous ideas that they are studying in their present form.

With art courses:

At all levels, students are given the opportunity to sketch as a means of data collection and observation of what they see. Sketching is especially important in dissection laboratories. In middle school, students make posters and three-dimensional models of biomes. Many students paint and use other art media to improve their posters. In upper school anatomy and physiology, students build clay models of muscles on desktop skeletons. In biology and chemistry, building models is common: DNA, cells, molecules, etc.

With outdoor club trips:

During the ten-day backpack trip, frequent lessons in botany, ecology, plant identification, astronomy (we frequently hike during the August Perseid meteor shower), and geology are given. The physics of carrying backpacks and first aid are two of the most frequent lessons on the trail. Some lessons are planned while most are impromptu, given while hiking, during rests, or in the evening. Additional outdoor club trips that are integrated to geology include caving at the Lava Beds National Monument in Northern California and mountain climbing.

With foreign language courses:

Frequently in the life sciences (middle school life science and upper school biology), science terms are broken down into their Latin and Greek (and other) roots. This is also true in middle school and upper school chemistry in the study of the periodic table and in geology terms.

With computer courses:

Middle school students are learning to use word processing applications as well as graphing and presentation software. They have opportunities to practice these skills in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Upper school students practice and advance these skills in their high school science courses. Additionally, they have the opportunity to use interactive software specific to physics, biology, and chemistry courses (this was further expanded upon in 29.5).

With physical education and health courses:

In eighth grade Health, students learn CPR and first aid as they learn human biology. Biology students determine their blood type and relate this to *Erythroblastosis fetalis*. They study the

physiology of aerobic and anaerobic respiration. Anatomy and Physiology is a health class in which students study normal and abnormal health. Circulation is studied with *Daphnia magna*, a water flea, and students measure their own blood pressure and pulse rates to collect data on their fitness. Viral replication in general, and HIV retroviruses specifically, are studied in biology and Anatomy and Physiology. In an A.P. Chemistry organic chemistry unit, students synthesize acetyl salicylic acid (aspirin).

Guest speakers from diverse health professions also come to both middle and upper school classes to discuss their fields and research.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

The department consists of four upper school science teachers and two FTE middle school science teachers. A number of factors contribute to the distribution of human resources in the science department. First is student need and is teaching the required science courses from middle school sciences through eleventh-grade chemistry. Faculty members also all have degrees or endorsements in the fields they teach and are well-trained with expertise in their subject areas. Beyond required science courses, teachers also offer advanced courses. Administrators make faculty placement decisions based on teacher expertise, department suggestions, and student demand for courses.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Departmental budgets are negotiated a year in advance with input from the department chair and science faculty. Teachers submit purchase orders for consumables and equipment for approval to the department chair. The department budgets mostly for items it knows it will need throughout the year, but the budget is generous enough to purchase new and unexpected items. Additionally, for bigger budget items, teachers make requests to the Wish Board at the yearly auction. These items are paid for with dedicated funds by generous patrons.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

Occasionally, a new science program is proposed and approved, but because the budget has already been set, monies are needed to be found from alternative sources to support the course. When the department began the human anatomy and physiology course, for example, the teacher wished to purchase ten manikins and related supplies. Parents and friends of the school purchased individual units (one manikin and supplies) at the auction allowing the course to be offered the following year. Currently, the department is planning to add Advanced Placement Physics next year and will determine the requisite instrumentation and equipment. Adding new

courses, especially at the advanced placement level, is driven in part by student and family interest. Serendipity sometimes plays a role in placing personnel. In the case of A.P. Physics, a teacher from the math department expressed an interest in offering the course, making it unnecessary to hire a new teacher.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

Individual teachers survey their classes at the end of the year, soliciting student feedback on their courses. Analyzing Advanced Placement examination results and feedback from the College Board allows teachers to adjust their classes and improve deficiencies. Additionally, the department is a very collegial in both its decision-making within the department and in its professional and personal assistance to colleagues. Teachers spend a great deal of time in each others' classrooms (due in part to limited teacher prep space). They also discuss pedagogy, share curriculum and ideas, and problem-solve difficulties. As a result, St. Mary's science teachers in large part have learned to be successful from one another.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

All teachers participate in Meaningful Faculty Evaluation (MFE) through Independent School Management. We fill out and submit a faculty growth workbook identifying and describing objectives and routes to completing these objectives. We have an administrative partner monitor our objectives and progression towards success. Additionally, we attend professional development seminars, listed below:

- Katie Miller renewed Oregon Teaching License (Aug, 2007)
 - Summer Program: Generating Income and Students (Oct, 2007), 25 hrs
 - PNAIS Conference (Oct, 2007), 8 hrs
 - Red Cross Instructor Update Certification, (Mar, 2006)
 - Red Cross Instructor Certification (Dec, 2005)
 - Bullying Workshop (Oct, 2005), 8 hrs

- Lia Kirkpatrick
 - PNAIS Conference (Fall, 2007), 6 hours
 - Southern Oregon University, Oceanography (Spring, 2006), 30 hours
 - OMSI Teacher Courses (Summer, 2006), 16 hours
 - Oregon Envirothon Seminar (Fall, 2005), 8 hours

- Holly Bensel
 - Bear Creek Watershed Tour (Fall, 2007), 5 hours

- RESEARCH BASED SCIENCE EDUCATION (RBSE) Program for High School Science Teachers, 2007, 80 hour long distance class work and 80 hours in class work
 - FRED JONES CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT COURSE, (Jul-Aug, 2007), 24 hours
 - 2006 COLLEGE ASTRONOMY TEACHING WORKSHOP, Learner-Centered College Astronomy Teaching, CAPERS TEAM, University of Arizona, (Jul, 2006), 40 hours
 - GAVRT/SPITZER COMBINED RADIO-INFRARED RESEARCH PROJECT, the Lewis Center for Educational Research GAVRT Program, (Jul, 2006), 50 hours
- Dr. Paula Stenberg
 - Bear Creek Watershed Tour (Fall, 2007), 5 hours
 - Mask-making Workshop at Southern Oregon University (Summer, 2007)
 - Myologik Institute in Boulder, Colorado (muscle building on resin skeletons using clay, Summer, 2006)
 - Shakespeare in Ashland Institute (Summer, 2005)
- Dr. Rebecca Lovett
 - Advanced Placement Chemistry Course Workshop, San Marcos University (2007)
- Jerry Burke: renewed Oregon Teaching License (2007)
 - Bear Creek Watershed Tour (Fall, 2007), 5 hours
 - Sustainable Forestry Tour, Idaho. (Jun 20-23, 2007), 30 hours
 - Oregon State University, Woodlands Management (Jun, 2006), 6 hours
 - OSU workshop: Forest Stand Improvement (Oct, 2006), 3 hours
 - Riparian Tree Planting--OSU Extension, (Oct, 2005), 5 hours

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The department has a number of strengths. Because St. Mary's families and the administration value science teaching, much of what the faculty does is made easier. Teachers identified strengths and weaknesses in three areas: laboratory equipment and spaces, curriculum, and professional development. To identify these strengths and weaknesses, faculty members met in small groups and brainstormed, and then met as a department to organize the various suggestions. In the realm of laboratory equipment and spaces, strengths include the fact that the department has modern equipment due to generous patrons, administrative support, and grants. Teachers also have new laboratory spaces in all three upper school science rooms and one new lab in the middle school. These are well-organized, and the conformation of the chemistry and biology laboratories is flexible for different room setups. Most instrumentation is up to date. In terms of the curriculum, while the faculty recognizes the need for continual improvement, it is currently satisfied with the science curriculum as a whole at St. Mary's School. The department's scope and sequence covers scientific subjects well, is age-appropriate, and holds

students to a high standard. Also, the transition between middle and upper school is smooth. But, because the department's science scope does not follow that of local public school districts, students receive the greatest benefit if they start at St. Mary's in sixth grade. Teachers also have the freedom to develop their curricula. Furthermore, electives have been added to enhance the upper school science curriculum. Perhaps the common denominator of all these strengths is the administrative support for science found at both the middle school and upper school levels. The last strength is in regard to professional development. Teachers are encouraged to pursue their interests and incorporate them into the curriculum. This is true in the science department as well as the whole school.

One area of weakness is in field trips and laboratory needs. Planning field trips has become prohibitory given current transportation issues. Insurance policies dictate that the school rent school buses, which puts the department at the mercy of the Medford school district, or rent vans, requiring more drivers and greater expense and travel time to pick up the vehicles. Science teachers identify a need for more help in laboratory classes. Assistance in lab set up, equipment organization and cleaning, and storage is a potential growth area for our department. In the middle school, design of the storage space and storage in room 24 remain a problem. Most of the upper school labs (especially chemistry and biology) are designed to accommodate 16-18 students. With increased enrollment, classes of over 20 are becoming more common and tax the spaces they were designed for originally. Changing school computer needs has caused two of the three computers from one of the middle school science rooms to be farmed out to other locations with no plan for replacement. A dire need in the science department, and throughout the school, is for dedicated digital projectors in classrooms.

Another weakness involves new students or students changing classes, and curricular integration. Sometimes the freedom a teacher has in his/her curriculum may lead to students in different sections of the same class receiving different experiences. While differences are not necessarily harmful, students switching sections may miss or repeat instruction. As far as integration is concerned, horizontal integration between the middle school science curriculum and other disciplines is done well, and teachers frequently discuss topics and strategies. For example, the eighth grade health curriculum complements the human biology curriculum. However, in the upper school, science integration is limited to math classes, especially physics and chemistry. Greater communication between disciplines in the upper school might allow science classes to reinforce what is being taught in other classes.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

To assist science teachers in keeping up with the demands of maintaining their labs, the department suggests allowing teacher assistants at the school. Interested students in academic labs could be encouraged to participate in this program. Reducing laboratory class size may have to wait until the school is expanded. Requesting equipment on the Wish Board is the best way to address this need.

To address the curriculum weakness, the department will continue to ensure new science teachers are mentored by those teaching the same material and work to coordinate curricula

between section teachers. Curriculum mapping and interpersonal communication make this process easier.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The school has a fine collection of science equipment and the means to expand this collection as required, and a strong science faculty that is well-trained, enthusiastic, and committed to their fields of study and their students.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The department would like to develop more coursework in the areas of biotechnology and environmental studies as the school grows and to continue to work on reducing laboratory class sizes to 18 or fewer.

Social Studies

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Vincent Comerchero (Chair), John Ward, Tami Lohman, Anne Adderson, Andrew Lunt, Kacey Dewing, Hal Wing, Alan McCreedy, Patrick Naumes, Alastair Hunter, and Rick Jackson.

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The goals and objectives of the social studies department are to inspire and develop culturally literate, skilled, confident, and compassionate graduates who have both a broad and in-depth understanding of the past, curiosity for and appreciation of the diversity of human culture, recognition of and the analytical power to use a range of social studies disciplines, confidence to navigate their ways in diverse and rapidly changing societies, and commitment to improving themselves and their world.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The social studies department at St. Mary's is organized into middle-school and upper-school divisions and provides students with a firm academic foundation in a variety of core classes as well as with the opportunity to pursue areas of individual interest by means of a selection of elective offerings. In the middle school, basic social science study skills are developed in a three year history sequence. Students examine the interaction of geography, resources, political organization, and religion in the rise and fall of civilizations. Sixth graders explore ancient world history from the birth of civilizations through the fall of Rome. Seventh graders study the West and the world from the Middle Ages through the Age of Exploration. Eighth graders focus on American history and its political, economic, social and cultural development.

In the upper school, students complete their core social studies classes and pursue elective offerings in areas of individual interest. Ninth graders explore ancient world history by studying some of the world's greatest classical texts. Tenth graders study the modern world in human geography and engage in local and global problem solving through the Twenty-Twenty Project. Eleventh graders take either U.S. history or Advanced Placement US History and one-semester of either civics or A.P. Government. Elective offerings in the social studies department include A.P. Micro Economics, A.P. Macro Economics, A.P. European History, A.P. Art History, and semester-long offerings in the modern Middle East, modern China, and entrepreneurial leadership.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

Teachers in the social studies department believe that middle and high school students learn in a variety of ways, requiring attention to program design and the use of a variety of teaching

techniques. The department believes that students learn best when they are challenged, actively engaged, receive constructive feedback, and see the relevance and purpose of what they are learning. They need to have some choice in their course of study, to approach the material and skills in a variety of ways, and not be subject to excessive stress. In all classes, students are challenged with meaningful lessons and assignments, given the opportunity to participate actively through discussions and other projects, presented with options regarding individual assignments, and provided constructive feedback on their performance.

Teachers in the middle school tailor their lessons to match middle school students' unique learning styles by teaching to a number of modalities. Teachers differentiate instruction based on skill, affinity, personality, and emotional maturity. Middle school classes meet more frequently and for shorter class periods than in the upper school. Students are given options for alternative methods of achievement and assessment. Sixth grade students participate in an afternoon homeroom class one day in three to further develop projects and experiences from earlier in the day. Early in the year, for example, homeroom classes are used for library orientation in preparation for students' first research projects. Middle school students also receive advisor access at the end of each day to provide them with additional social, emotional, and organizational support.

In the upper school, guiding beliefs about how students learn also inform the design of the curriculum. Beginning in their junior years, students have the option of taking elective social studies offerings, and they may choose the topic of their Junior Project, a twelve- to twenty-page, thesis-driven research paper in American studies. In order to minimize stress, social studies teachers coordinate the scheduling of major assignments with the other departments. Horizontal integration with history, English and religion classes are also achieved in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. In the ninth grade, for example, students take ancient history, early church, and world literature from the rise of civilizations through the Renaissance. Tenth grade students study human geography, world religions, and world literature. And eleventh graders focus on American studies by taking United States or Advanced Placement United States History, civics or Advanced Placement Government, American literature, and also by writing a Junior Project.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

The social studies department fulfills the school mission in a variety of ways.

In the middle school students are exposed to a variety of cultural perspectives and encouraged to think beyond themselves and practice empathy by writing first-person historical narratives. They also explore the rise and fall of civilizations and the qualities of good leaders. The study of geography and history are also intertwined, leading students to an understanding of place and the interaction between human societies and the environment, a major theme that is developed later in tenth grade human geography as well.

In the upper school, students are challenged to think beyond the immediacy of the self and about their roles as vital contributors to the larger community. In history, students study the power of individuals to aspire to nobility and serve their fellow human beings, and also about their

capacity for barbarism and destruction. Civics and A.P. Government teach students about the founding ideals of the Republic and about principles of democracy which citizens share and have a collective responsibility to uphold. Other social studies classes, such as human geography, A.P. European History, Modern China, and the Modern Middle East stimulate students' intellectual curiosity by exposing them to cultures they have not encountered before and allowing them choice in their areas of study. And all social studies classes promote academic excellence by challenging students with rigorous courses of study and by rewarding student achievement with departmental awards.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

In both the middle and upper school, social studies classes promote free and open inquiry in a variety of ways. In all social studies classes, teachers make efforts to create safe learning environments and encourage students to ask questions and participate in civil and lively discussions about past and present issues. Students are also given some choices as to the variety of assignments they can complete, and in the upper school, they have opportunities to choose their own elective offerings.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

Encouraging moral and ethical development is a major focus of the social studies department.

In the middle school, moral and ethical development are highlighted both in the management of classes and in the curriculum. Students are thus encouraged on a daily basis to be good citizens, to work together with their peers to create successful learning communities, and to take leadership roles in meeting learning objectives set for a group. Students also study human moral and ethical development from the birth of civilizations through modern American history, an emphasis that equips, empowers, and inspires them to behave conscientiously and think about what is good for society as a whole. Middle school teachers also inspire students to appreciate the commonality and diversity of human cultures and to develop tolerance for those different from themselves.

In the upper school, ethical development is a powerful theme in all social studies classes. Ancient history students study classical texts that explore the question of what it means to be a good person, and they examine examples of human nobility and baseness. In Human Geography, the Challenge Twenty-Twenty Project and students' focus on global solutions stems from the conviction that we are all inhabitants of a human community in profound need of collective efforts to solve problems plaguing humankind and our world. In entrepreneurial leadership, students learn how to practice business in ethical ways. And in United States history, students learn about contradictions between America's ideals and the development of the Republic, and about the responsibility that citizenship imposes on each of us to fulfill, maintain, and uphold those ideals.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

In the middle school, students explore a vast panorama of human cultures in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, and they examine a variety of sources, including art, literature, laws, music and other primary and secondary sources in order to learn about and appreciate the richness of human culture.

In the upper school, the breadth of human culture is also richly explored. In ancient history, A.P. United States History, A.P. European History, A.P. Art History, modern China, and the modern Middle East, students are exposed to and study a variety of primary-source documents and artistic achievements that convey the diversity of human culture. Guest speakers are also occasionally invited to social studies classes to share their experiences and perspectives. The Challenge Twenty-Twenty Global Solutions Project also provides a means whereby students can gain exposure to the viewpoints of fellow global citizens.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Technology is used by individual social studies teachers in a variety of ways with the recognition that its use confers benefits and also entails pitfalls. The mobile laptop lab is employed extensively in middle and upper school social studies classes, and internet research on the part of students begins in the sixth grade and continues through the middle and high school years. Teachers also employ computers and digital projectors to create multi-media experiences for students that appeal to their diverse learning styles, and students giving oral presentations have the option of using PowerPoint. In seventh grade history/geography, students also take on-line tests and are given the option of retaking them to raise their scores, a practice that deepens their knowledge and understanding and maintains their motivation. In eighth grade United States history, students use the interactive textbook website to review for tests and learn the material more thoroughly.

The upper school faculty also widely use instructional technology. In ninth grade ancient history, digital presentations supplement more traditional lessons, discussions of primary sources, and simulations. In tenth grade human geography, teachers use GIS software (Arc Explorer) to create and view maps from data available online. In eleventh grade civics and A.P. Government, lecture notes are presented using PowerPoint, and some of the lectures are recorded on MP3 and converted into WAV files that are saved on the student shared drive so that students who are absent may hear them later. In addition, videos play a role, though a small one, in the curriculum of the department and are used carefully to enhance student understanding of specific eras and events. Increasingly however, teachers use small video clips, available on the internet, to reinforce ideas and understanding, and the internet as a whole is a vast, and increasingly valuable resource for this department. Students now conduct much of their research via the internet, particularly for the Junior Project, but also for other research projects, such as the Challenge Twenty-Twenty Project. The Challenge Twenty-Twenty Project also uses technology to collaborate with its partner school via e-mail and blogs. The Modern Middle East History class has also been part of a pilot group using a blog to discuss Iranian history with other high school students and professors from Brown University. The internet is also used by teachers to quickly assemble multiple perspectives and thus provide unique opportunities to practice information

assessment and bias analysis, whether it be of news sources, or sites created by individuals and organizations.

The use of technology however, poses a number of challenges. The department's embrace of technology seems to be increasing faster than the budget to acquire it. For example, the computer lab is often over booked, and the school very likely could use another entire lab. The department also has acquired several projectors in recent years, but often the demand for projectors still exceeds the supply. From a pedagogical perspective, students often do not have the skills to use the internet effectively, and they need more direct instruction in how to find, assess, and use appropriate sources. The universal availability of the internet to students also can be a distraction for students who often prefer to use it in inappropriate or inefficient ways.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The social studies department is closely integrated with numerous other school programs, but most closely with English, religion, and art.

In the middle school, history, English and art classes are horizontally integrated. History provides the background context in which literary themes and artistic achievements are explored. Sixth grade students, for example, study ancient history while they read a selection of historical fiction that relates to the civilizations they study. In their art classes, students create several projects that of historical relevance, such as Greek vases and Egyptian canopic jars. Eighth grade students study United States history while reading American literature, writing on American literary themes, and participating in the Manor Project, a capstone project of the eighth grade year where students write biographies of local senior citizens that are then presented to them. The Manor Project by design not only teaches students biographical writing skills, but connects students to the preceding generation, cements the generational contract, and prompts thinking among students about their future potential legacies.

In the upper school, horizontal integration with English and Religion is also present. In ninth grade, students study ancient civilization in history, the early church in religion, and western literature through the Renaissance in English; in the tenth grade, students explore human geography, world religions, and world literature; and in the eleventh grade, students study United States history, civics/government, and American literature, and they research and write the junior project.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

A number of factors influence the distribution of human resources within the department. The most important factor in making teaching assignments is to assign classes to teachers based on their expertise in a particular field. However, teachers' interests and the needs of the division

and school in general are considered, as is teacher workload, which typically varies from five to six classes and two to four preps.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Each year, the department chair is asked to submit a budget in cooperation with department members. Department members are surveyed as to planned major purchases and costs associated with new course offerings so that they can be budgeted for accordingly. Department members then submit their requests for purchases to the department chair who approves them before they are made.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The department has been slowly increasing the availability of its technology resources with the purchase of digital projectors and audio-visual equipment. The school has also supplemented these efforts with additional technology purchases, such as of a mobile laptop laboratory with wireless access.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

The department evaluates whether it is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development in a variety of ways. As part of each class, students are given frequent assessments and projects that measure student learning, and discussions provide an informal means to evaluate student progress that supplement more formal assignments and assessments such as written reading-comprehension, free-response, and document-based questions. In the middle school, the Stanford/OLSAT results provide a norm-referenced indication of students' performance and progress compared to the mean and other Archdiocese schools. In Advanced Placement courses, student test scores on the Advanced Placement examinations are also considered. Finally, some teachers also give students the opportunity to complete anonymous course evaluation forms at the end of the course.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

Department members have pursued numerous professional development opportunities over the past couple of years that have enhanced the caliber of instruction. These have included a number of middle and upper school teachers' attending week-long History Alive seminars to enhance their repertoire of instructional techniques to reach diverse learners, a teacher's traveling to the Middle East to conduct research for a semester-long elective on the modern Middle East, another

teacher's participating in the Advanced Placement United States History Exam Reading and in an A.P. U.S. History workshop that has enhanced the instruction of how to write free-response and document-based essays, and a teacher's participation in the All Kinds of Minds seminar that led to a revision of how the Junior Project is structured and implemented. All teachers as well annually complete teaching preferences and objectives surveys as part of Independent School Management's Meaningful Faculty Evaluation System. As a result of this process, individual teachers have met with Montessori school teachers to learn techniques to reach students of various learning styles, they have developed courses on modern China and entrepreneurial leadership, and they have attended topical sessions at various conferences including the PNAIS All-Schools Conferences, as well as pursued other professional growth opportunities.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

A great strength of the social studies department at St. Mary's School is the large number of courses in a variety of disciplines that it offers. These include lower division courses in history, geography, and government; Advanced Placement courses in government, U.S. history, macro- and micro-economics, European history, and art history, as well as semester-long elective classes in the modern Middle East, modern China, and entrepreneurial leadership. The curriculum is also rigorous in terms of content, skills, and pace. The department is also creative and adaptable, and since the last self study, it has made an effort to enhance the variety of instructional practices to meet the needs of students of diverse skills, learning styles and intelligences. Social studies teachers also are often able to help students understand the relevance of what they are learning by connecting classroom studies to current issues. Lastly, an atmosphere of openness and self-criticism characterizes the department.

The weaknesses of the department are similar to those that would be typical at a growing school. The proliferation of elective offerings has raised the question of what the canon of social studies courses should be. Some teachers also have regretted the increased atomization and lessening of opportunities for collegiality within the department, especially between middle school and upper school teachers now that most department members no longer teach in both divisions. Other teachers have commented that their teaching load and non-teaching responsibilities have left them with less time than they would like to develop their classes. In addition, with recent revisions to the middle school and upper school curricula, the department needs to facilitate collaboration and discussions between the divisions in the area of scope and sequence by participating in the school-wide review of teachers' curriculum maps. Finally, the department does not employ consistent and uniform evaluation vehicles for students to assess individual courses and instructors.

These strengths and weaknesses were solicited from department members at a fully attended social studies department meeting.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

Given time constraints, the department has decided to prioritize its efforts and to explore various course evaluation models, possibly by using Survey Monkey to provide individual course and aggregate data about the effectiveness of the curriculum and teachers within the department.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The social studies department offers students a rich a varied mission-appropriate curriculum.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The social studies department should work to develop a formal instrument for students to use in evaluating their classes.

Health, Physical Education, and Athletics

Who was responsible for this section of the report? James Joy, Rick Jackson, Tim Pflug, Lia Kirkpatrick, and Katie Miller.

Good Practice #29: The school’s program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program’s goals or objectives?

The health, physical education and athletics department at St. Mary's School seeks to build knowledge, skills, and character leading to a healthy lifestyle. The major physical athletic and health goals of the department are to build students' knowledge of a variety of activities, to develop individual skills, to teach students strategic thinking, and to foster teamwork in the form of communication, sportsmanship, and sharing, as well as promote interscholastic competition. Affectively, the department seeks to promote a healthy lifestyle, to develop a love of activities, and to foster an appreciation of sportsmanship, discipline, responsibility, and the importance of safety. Instructors also celebrate individual and team performances and accomplishments. In physical education classes instructors place a greater emphasis on participation, effort, and performance as opposed to outcome.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

In the middle school, the health, physical education and athletics department offers a variety of courses. In their semester-long eighth grade health class, students study health holistically and explore aspects of physical, mental, and social health. For example, in physical health, students study body systems, and the harmful physiological effects of drugs and alcohol. In middle-school P.E. classes a sequence of one- to two-week units that focus on rules, skill building, and tournament play, where participation, sportsmanship, and teamwork are stressed is offered. Activities include Hawaiian football, ultimate Frisbee, lacrosse, capture the football, badminton, volleyball, pickle ball, basketball, softball, kickball, dodge ball, floor, hockey, and *sepak takraw*—a south Asian sport that combines soccer and volleyball skills. Units are sequenced according to teacher and student interest and weather. Middle-school interscholastic sports include basketball, football, volleyball, cross country, and track and field. The emphasis of these programs is on player development--to teach skills and strategies. Establishing a competitive and winning environment is encouraged, but is not the driving force behind the teams at this level. All students-athletes in good standing experience “fairly equal” playing time.

In the upper school, the same instructional sequencing is applied to year-long physical education classes with the exception of advanced sports training and aikido. In advanced sports training, students participate in speed and quickness drills, strengthening and cardio-vascular exercises, and also develop athletic skills in traditional high school sports such as basketball, volleyball, football, and track and field. In aikido, students learn the basics of the discipline in the traditional *budo* manner and cover topics and skills such as safety (*ukemi*), circularity, centering, *ki*, taking the attacker’s balance, entering (*irmimi*) and getting off the line, skills that are demonstrated and tested by means of *gokyu* and *yokyu* rank exams. Upper school athletics offer students the

opportunity to compete interscholastically at the varsity and junior varsity levels in football, volleyball, cross country, soccer, golf, tennis, track and field, baseball, softball, and basketball. The emphasis of junior varsity athletics is to enhance skills and give students playing experience to prepare participants for future varsity play. Establishing a winning environment is encouraged. All student-athletes in good standing are allowed to participate in every event, though the amount of playing time per student-athlete is not guaranteed. The emphasis of varsity athletic programs is to field the most competitive OSAA approved teams possible. Therefore, playing time is not guaranteed—even among student-athletes in good standing. Coaches play as many student-athletes as possible, but playing time may vary widely due to individual skill, performance in practices, and opponent match-ups. The *St. Mary's School Coaches Manual* describes the department's philosophy, goals, objectives, and policies in greater detail.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The health, physical education and athletics department believes that students learn better when they are safe, challenged, actively engaged, understand the relevance of what they are doing, have opportunities for leadership and camaraderie, participate in a variety of activities, and recognize that their instructors care about their well being. The department therefore strives to involve students at all levels in a variety of activities and roles throughout the year that are described above.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

Teachers strive to design classes and units that are safe, challenging, and developmentally appropriate. In order to provide a safe learning environment, rules are reviewed at the start of each unit, and students of like abilities, sizes, and strengths are paired wherever possible. Equipment is also modified for safety, for example tennis balls are used in place of lacrosse balls, and some participants are required to wear safety gear. All students participating in interscholastic athletics are also required to pass a physical examination. In all units, students are expected to participate fully regardless of skill. In addition, instructors provide explanations as to the benefits of certain types of exercises and activities. Instructors also make efforts to challenge students mentally and physically, by exploring strategic and tactical options with them and in the middle school by encouraging performance as opposed to outcomes. At the start of each day, student leaders are selected to guide each class in warm-up activities, and teachers provide encouragement and reinforce positive behavior in the realm of sportsmanship.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

The department promotes the mission statement by inspiring and preparing students to follow a healthy lifestyle, and to develop both leadership and good citizenship or sportsmanship in athletics. It also encourages the development of the whole person.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The department promotes free and open inquiry in a number of ways. In all classes, students are encouraged to ask questions, and to make their own tactical choices and individual decisions as to physical maneuvers.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

Ethical development is encouraged both in health class where a sense of reverence for the human body is taught and in physical education and interscholastic athletics, where sportsmanship is championed. The school's athletic teams also celebrate sportsmanship and character, by routinely granting most inspirational player awards to athletes who demonstrate exemplary character. Finally, one of the school's highest athletic awards, the Latendresse Award, goes to the St. Mary's graduating athlete who exemplifies the qualities of sportsmanship and inspirational citizenship to the community.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

The health, physical education and athletics department promotes diverse and multicultural perspective, experiences, and materials by exposing students to a variety of activities that have their origins in numerous cultures. Aikido, lacrosse, Hawaiian football, and *Sepak Takraw* are some examples of these sports. In addition, students have exposure to and are encouraged to participate in sports which they may not have tried before.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Technology is used in a variety of ways. In health class students have access to computers for research projects, and students are encouraged to browse periodicals for recent developments in the field of health. In physical education classes, gear that is appropriate to each unit is used. In athletics, teams keep up-to-date statistical data to enhance individual and team performance. Video tapes of competitions and training techniques are also reviewed to improve instruction and performance. The school also recently purchased a fully automated timer for use during track-and-field events.

The department faces a number of challenges in the realm of technology. Some of the department's equipment is dated and the current facilities limit opportunities across the department. For example the lack of a fitness facility, limits training opportunities which would enhance student performance across the curriculum.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The health, physical education, and athletics department is generally an autonomous one with little integration with other departments. In the eighth grade health, the degree of concurrent integration depends on students' schedules. For example, eighth grade health is integrated with the second semester of eighth grade science. During the course of the semester, students concurrently study

nutrition and the digestive system, exercise and the cardiovascular system, and drugs, alcohol and tobacco with the nervous system. Their studies on human sexual development and sexually transmitted diseases coincide with studies of the reproductive system. Finally, disease studies are integrated with a unit on the immune system and a special case study on HIV and AIDS. Throughout the semester of health, emphasis is put on using nutrition, exercise, and stress relief as part of their daily routine in order to become a healthier student and excel in their studies and co-curricular activities. There is little integration with physical education courses and athletics teams.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Human resources are determined primarily by the needs of the school, interest of the student body or parent community, and in an effort to place specialists in areas of their expertise.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Every year the athletic director solicits requests for equipment from coaches and instructors within the department which then drafts a budget for submission to the administration which makes the ultimate decision as to the allocation of funds. The St. Mary's Booster Club also raises money for equipment purchases in support of the program based on program needs. The booster club also donates funds for students with demonstrated financial need.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The long-range facilities plan calls for the construction of an additional gym, fitness center, training room and locker rooms. The school also has a cooperative relationship with the Medford Parks and Recreation department to exchange facilities to benefit both organizations.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

The department assesses the effectiveness of the program in a variety of ways. Improved student skill development, demonstrations of student and parent satisfaction, and the high level of participation in the program all testify to its success. The consecutive yearly winning of the Oregonian Cup also demonstrates the degree to which the program succeeds in fostering sportsmanship, performance, academic achievement, and participation.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

Faculty have participated in a number of professional development opportunities over the past two years. All coaches are required to be first aid/CPR certified and to complete a coaches' clinic sponsored by the National Federation of High Schools. Coaches are also encouraged to make use of professional development funds to attend clinics. The upper school varsity girls volleyball coach for instance attended an all-sports clinic and the assistant varsity soccer coach attended a soccer clinic in the spring of 2008. The school athletic director also attends the annual Oregon Athletic Director Association Conference.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The health, physical education, and athletics department has a number of strengths. Eighth grade health provides students with a good introduction into the concepts of lifetime wellness and fitness. The school also has a very knowledgeable and talented coaching staff including a number of state, award-winning coaches. The school's facilities, while limited, are also of high quality, and the school has made a commitment to expanding and improving them. The department also complements to school program well by providing students with opportunities to explore potentials outside of the classroom. Faculty members are also highly supportive of the school mission and of each other's programs. In addition, the school has very high rates of student participation in athletics.

The weaknesses of the program include the high turnover of the coaching staff at the sub-varsity level and the lack of facilities, lighting, and storage. In addition, the heavy workload of the full-time teaching and coaching staff make it difficult to arrange opportunities for face-to-face communication and departmental meetings. Lengthy travel times is also an issue for some athletes who miss class time as a result. Supervision in the girls' locker room could also be improved.

These weaknesses were solicited from the departmental faculty via e-mail.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The school has recently upgraded its lighting system in the gym.

• **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The health, physical education and athletics program complements the academic program at St. Mary's School well and provides a tremendous variety of opportunities for students to develop their potentials through sport and fitness.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

None.

Library

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The library's programs and collections exist to be the school's source for self-supported study, for faculty led research projects, a place of gathering and community for students, faculty and staff, and a source of inspiration to students to broaden their knowledge of the world. In pursuit of this, the library provides access to a broad selection of high quality reference books, internet websites and databases, fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, and periodicals and professional journals. The library collections and internet are easily accessible and continually updated. Students are encouraged to make use of the library's resources for both academic projects and personal enjoyment.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The library is open 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. During school hours the library is booked by teachers for research and use of the computers. The library's computers are located in the main library room and also in a self-contained classroom. All students receive library orientation. Formal orientation is given to sixth graders every fall, which includes a physical tour of the library, a visual application lesson on library catalog research and follow up lessons on particular topics. Ongoing library orientation occurs with other grade levels throughout the school year, as needed by topic.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The library provides a wide range of resources to support the various ways in which students access and process information. The library provides a comfortable, visually appealing, well-lit main room and computer lab, with places for group study, lecture, or quiet with teachers to address special needs of students.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

The library's approach is based on having information and materials for student use readily available and easy to access. Library staff members seek to hone enthusiasm for finding information and help students ask pertinent questions. A positive environment in the library helps students approach their academic work whether they are preparing a PowerPoint presentation, using markers and colored pencils for geography homework, writing papers, or typing college application essays.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

The library seeks to provide the widest possible range of resources for students and faculty as they explore academic questions within the framework of the school's mission statement. The staff shows enthusiasm for student work and continually works to arouse curiosity for subjects through displays. Displays may highlight an in-depth look at the global community such as the display on the 2007 Nobel Prize winners, or they might focus on an aspect of the school community such as the display of teachers' favorite books. Displays augment and extend what is being explored in the classroom and therefore the mission statement. In addition, the library seeks to provide a broad and diverse collection of resources for students as they engage in intellectual inquiry and explore multicultural themes.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

Library materials and access to the internet is readily available to the entire school. Sensible restrictions apply for website research for students. Students are encouraged to explore subjects of personal interest as well as those particular to their assignments. With few restrictions, students are allowed as much access as possible to pursue lines of inquiry to their logical conclusion. The faculty and staff strive to teach students how to think, not what to think and the library resources for free inquiry allow for this to happen.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The library works in conjunction with faculty to teach proper source citation for research work. The library strives to make citing reminders easily accessible--examples are on prominent display for student use—and it seeks to help students avoid plagiarism. Students are encouraged to collaborate when appropriate and to work independently when appropriate. Library materials and multiple databases, for example, *Opposing Viewpoints*, are provided to help students form well-researched ethical opinions.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

The library collections and electronic services provide for a wide range of perspectives and are specifically chosen to support the global element of the school's mission statement. Acquisitions are continuously being made to further broaden the collection. The library's collections encompass a wide variety of viewpoints on historical, religious, political, and social issues. Students are encouraged to access any and all of the resources and to make suggestions as to what new material is needed. Students are encouraged to pursue multiethnic and diverse cultural perspectives.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

The library's computers are continually being upgraded and efforts are made to add new computers whenever possible. The library's main room computers and its computer classroom is in continuous use. The challenge is to have enough computers available for student work. The

library's forty computers are reserved throughout the day as needed by faculty and are in high demand. Faculty and staff work with the students continually on proper computer use and to ensure that priority for computer use is given to students and faculty for academic work. The library also employs filtering and monitoring software to ensure that student use is appropriate, and all students agree to the school's acceptable use policy when they sign the *Student/Parent Handbook*.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

Every departmental program of the school includes information gathering and research as part of its curriculum—the library is where these tasks are carried out. The library's collections, resources, and space support a wide variety of learning experiences. Sixth grade students, for example, receive a library orientation as a prelude to their Egypt research reports. Eighth graders conduct research for their American biography projects which culminate in a conference involving student speeches before a parental audience. Spanish students explore ancient American civilizations, and German students plan a travel itinerary to Germany. The Library and its resources are also used to support projects in art, science, religion, government, English and social studies classes as well, and much of the research for the junior and senior projects utilizes library resources. The library's open spaces are also used for student presentations and visits by guest speakers.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

The position of a single full-time librarian is a budgeted, salaried appointment. In addition, volunteers from the community help out with various tasks.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Book acquisitions, textbooks, internet databases, and electronic equipment maintained by the library are either chosen by library staff or recommended by department chairs and faculty. Purchases are approved by the principal. Choices are influenced by what is available from other local libraries. Some resources are accessed through the county library or educational service district.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The library could make use of more funding whenever it is made available. Faculty and student recommendations in addition to library staff choices are purchased within budgeted amounts. A

list of items the library needs but cannot buy at the moment is kept on hand. Parent volunteers for special projects and maintenance of the book collection keep library resources in good working order.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

Student and faculty feedback is encouraged at all times on an informal basis, and to the extent possible, recommendations for new books, magazines, teaching resources, and professional journals result in purchases. The library staff looks for resources to support curriculum units of study throughout the year and conducts correspondence with teachers on what more they could use. The library staff is also responsive to recommendations from parents and has recently acquired a collection of books to support parents in their relationships with their children, and the library staff frequently asks students what resources they use or would like to see in the library.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

The librarian attended the annual Oregon School Library Association fall conference in October, 2007, attended a local ESD workshop on collection development in November, 2007, and attended the regional OSLA spring workshop in March 2008. The information gathered has served to educate library staff on spending choices, the latest databases and technology for student research, and the latest information on library software. Making connections with library professionals from schools similar to St. Mary's has also been helpful and important as the library tries to stay one step ahead of the latest technological developments in the ever accelerating world of information.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The library space provides a welcoming atmosphere for students and faculty during class time and also during non-class time. The light, open space is inviting, and can accommodate student and faculty demand. The furnishings are comfortable and adequate. The materials are arranged in easily accessible shelves. The computers and the library printer are also easily accessible and available during all library hours. The library staff is available at all times to assist students and faculty with their work and is well trained both generally and to suit the particular environment and needs of St. Mary's. The size of the school and the library's central location make it possible for library staff to work closely with every member of the faculty at least once a week.

The weaknesses of the library include its outdated collections in places, the absence of a formal library scope and sequence, and the lack of formal though considerable on-the-job and on-going professional training of the existing librarian.

These strengths and weaknesses were identified as a result of individual brainstorming by the librarian, the self-study coordinators, and the head of school.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

Faculty and staff must continually work to address the challenge for students to know how to access paper research materials. Although informal feedback from faculty happens regularly, the library may benefit from a formal feedback process that helps the library know where it can strengthen its support for the school's academic programs.

The library is a multi-functional room, and although materials and resources are available, with the growth of the school, the challenge to accommodate a quiet study atmosphere is increasing.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The library is blessed with a well-designed, comfortable space, a generous supply of computers, and a well-trained staff familiar with the needs of St. Mary's students and faculty.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school needs to improve the training of students in the use of paper research materials, develop a formal system of evaluation or a survey to more accurately assess the library's success at meeting student and faculty needs, explore ways to relieve pressure on the space, and utilize curriculum mapping as a vehicle to develop a library scope and sequence. In addition, the library needs to continue to weed, update, and grow its collections; explore the possibility of updating its electronic cataloging software; and expand its research into what other programs and services libraries are offering through the Young Adult Library Services Association.

Advisor and Community Service Program

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Vincent Comerchero, Teresa Baumbach, and Jim Meyer

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The goals and objectives of the advisor group program at St. Mary's School are to provide parents with an additional liaison (aside from the administration and the parent coordinator) between themselves and the school community, and to give students both an academic advisor, and advocate in the event of an issue concerning a student's performance in a class, with another teacher, or in the event of a discipline matter. Advisors also consult with students regarding their schedules, monitor students' academic progress, and in cases where a student is struggling academically, arrange "staffings" involving the student and his/her parents or guardians in order to brainstorm more effective learning strategies and develop an independent educational plan for the student. Advisors also assist in the communication of community guidelines and concerns to students and help with the organization of community service projects. In addition, each class has a set of faculty moderators who help to organize biannual retreats and in cooperation with class officers guide the class in conducting class business.

The goals and objectives of the community service program at St. Mary's School are to serve the mission statement by tying responsibility to privilege, inspiring and empowering students with a sense of their potential as servant leaders, and concretely conveying to students the intrinsic value of good works broadly defined. The program is led by a faculty community service coordinator who leads a group of students on the community service committee which serves to assist students in finding meaningful community service projects as part of the 100-hour community service requirement that each St. Mary's student needs to fulfill in order to graduate.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

Advisor groups at St. Mary's school meet regularly to accomplish their objectives. In the middle school, advisor groups meet for fifteen minutes at the end of each day, a time that allows middle school advisors to assist students with organizational matters, academic planning, and to check in with students to gauge their social and emotional well being. Upper school advisor groups meet weekly for a half hour. As far as a formal curriculum or scope and sequence is concerned, middle school advisor groups are more structured and for the past three years have devoted a good deal of time to communication skills and conflict resolution. Using activities based on "Conflict Resolution in the Middle School" by William Kreidler, the goal of middle school conflict resolution program is to help students to develop an understanding of the nature of conflict, how it develops, how it (intentionally or unintentionally) escalates, and how to resolve it constructively and respectfully. The program's short lessons are concentrated in the first quarter of the year, are usually no more than 10 minutes in length, and involve role play, discussion, and

reflection. In the high school, advisors develop their own programs and individualize advising in their efforts to develop a rapport with students.

In terms of the community service program, advisors play an important role, and assist the community service coordinator and committee in implementing various community service functions, such as the Thanksgiving basket project, and Christmas giving tree, as well as other community service opportunities. In addition, the community service director and the community service committee arrange a bi-annual community service fair for students and a spring community service day when each advisor group performs community service at a designated venue within the local Rogue Valley community.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

Advisors at St. Mary's School believe that students perform best when they are in a safe and nurturing environment, when they have meaningful relationships with adults, when they know that their advisors wish them conspicuous daily success, when their advisors take an interest in their lives beyond school, and when they are presented with high expectations of their effort and conduct.

In the realm of community service, the school believes that students learn best by being actively engaged in service opportunities, by witnessing the tangible effect of their volunteer work on others, and by reflecting on their service by means of a culminating senior community service project. In addition, the school believes that high expectations of noble conduct and servant leadership inspire students to meaningful volunteer endeavors during their years at St. Mary's School and after their matriculation.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

In both areas, the school believes that teachers who have high expectations of students, care about their lives in and outside of school, and wish them conspicuous success are able to develop the rapport with students essential to inspiring them.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Advisor groups fulfill the school mission by helping to reinforce the culture of intellectual curiosity and commitment to academic excellence on campus as well as to foster individual, and humanistic, social responsibility and leadership among students.

The community service program serves the mission statement in a similar way and fulfills the school's desire to harmonize thought, word, and deed for the individual benefit of each student but also for the good of humankind. Lastly, the community service program provides students with the opportunity to live out the gospel of works and to become living disciples helping to make Christ's kingdom of heaven on earth a reality.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The advisor group and community service program promote free and open inquiry in a number of ways. In the upper school, many advisees choose their advisors. In addition, many advisor groups pursue activities of interest to individual advisees. In terms of community service opportunities, students have wide latitude to select meaningful community service opportunities for which they have an interest and passion.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The advisor group program and community service program promote ethical development in a number of ways. Advisors serve as role models for students and hold high expectations of individual behavior and ethical conduct. In middle school advisor groups, students also focus on conflict resolution. Class moderators also arrange retreats which provide reflective opportunities related to the mission statement and students' responsibilities as members of a broader community.

The community service program also has the benefit of fostering ethical development. By arranging opportunities for students to participate in meaningful community service, be it on Spring Day, by constructing and maintaining a riparian zone along Larson Creak or with the lunch buddies program with students from Orchard Hill Elementary School, and then by having students reflect on the influence and meaning of community service as part of their senior projects, the school encourages the development of students into responsible, socially conscious citizens and leaders.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

The advisor and community service programs expose students to diverse multicultural experiences and materials to a significant extent. Middle school conflict resolution involves an attempt to foster among students an awareness and recognition of the validity of other perspectives. In addition, as part of their community service endeavors, students are exposed to diverse members of the local community and even international community. Many St. Mary's students, for example, elect to participate in international community service opportunities such as building houses in Mexico, and the school's role and participation in the annual Chinese New Year celebration also provides students with a multicultural experience. The school's Thanksgiving prayer service has historically involved a presentation representing a multicultural perspective, typically by a Native American speaker or the sixth grade class representing a Native American folk tale. In addition, the school's biennial Global Solutions Day conference, which advisors help to arrange scheduling for, also provides students with opportunities to hear presentations from speakers representing a variety of viewpoints. Finally, all-school morning meetings also provide opportunities for students to hear presentations from speakers representing a variety of experiences and perspectives.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Technology is not a central aspect of the advisor group and community service programs. The school does electronically log students' community service hours and has the capability to print out detailed reports for students and advisors. Some advisors do use computers or video equipment depending on their and their students' interests, and basic garden tools are used during Spring Day, however the main focus of these programs is on human contact without the mediation of technology.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The degree of overlap between the advisor and community service programs on one hand and other school programs depends on the advisor group activity or the community service project. In general, there is little formal integration between these programs and other programs of the school. Individual advisors may however touch on issues in advisor group which relate to their advisees community service or an issue in the society at large. The most visible example of integration between these programs and other school programs takes place during the senior class advisor group which reviews graduation, community service, and senior project requirements periodically throughout the year to ensure that students are making adequate progress towards their matriculation.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

The needs and desires of the faculty, students, and administration are all considered in allocating human resources. All students are assigned an advisor, and for most part all faculty are expected to serve as advisors unless there is a special circumstance. The community service coordinator also serves as the college counselor and receives a degree of assistance from the administration and the community service committee.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased

Neither program requires instructional materials and equipment; therefore, no funds are required.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The program currently has sufficient resources to meet its needs.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

There is no formal process to assess or evaluate the degree to which the advisor and community service programs are contributing to students' progress, learning, and development. However, the support that advisor groups provide for academically struggling students often results in improved student performance over time. The positive atmosphere in advisor groups also testifies to their success. As far as the community service program is concerned, the substantial food gathered for the Thanksgiving basket program, the generosity of students in collecting Christmas gifts for the Dunn House, a shelter for battered women, and the high quality of students' senior projects all confirm the success of the program.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

Numerous faculty members have attended Mel Levine's week-long All Kinds of Minds or Schools Attuned seminars. This training has prompted modifications during the 2007-08 school year in the procedure for "staffings," where teachers complete an official staffing form that as a prelude to the formation of an educational plan asks them to answer the following questions:

What do I observe about this student's work in my subject area?

- What are my concerns about this student's work?
- How can I describe what I see without evaluating it?
- What are the student's strengths in this area?
- What are the student's strengths outside this area?

What are the typical strategies I can suggest?

- What are typical struggles of students in this academic area?
- What strategies do students often find helpful in this area of concern?
- What do you think academic success will look like in this area for this student?

The school plans to continue its work in this area and train more teachers to utilize Mel Levine's diagnostic and instructional methods.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The advisor and community service programs are important aspects of the overall school program. Advisors serve as advocates of their students and as partners in their learning and success at St. Mary's. According to anecdotal evidence, the middle school conflict resolution curriculum has translated into improved interactions among students in the middle school. Parents also appreciate the contact they have with their students' advisors. Advisors, the community service coordinator, the community service committee, and members of the administration also arrange meaningful community service opportunities for students. The high quality of senior projects generated by the program is also a strength.

The weaknesses of the advisor program include the lack of clarity on the part of some advisors as to what to do during weekly meetings. In addition, there is no scope and sequence for the class retreat program at St. Mary's. Finally, there is no formal mechanism to evaluate the program as a whole.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

During the 2008-09 academic year, the school has decided to address the discontinuity and lack of coherence of the retreat experience and the disruption it causes to students' class schedules by discontinuing them. Instead, the school will attempt to weave meaningful activities into the morning meeting schedule and it will periodically schedule class meetings throughout the year. In addition, the school will continue to provide guidance to advisors as to what their responsibilities are and how to fulfill their roles.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The advisor and community service programs are core elements of the school's mission.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school will continue to use the Schools Attuned model to better serve its students.

National Honor Society and Academic Clubs

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Teresa Baumbach and Vincent Comerchero

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The goals of the National Honor Society and the academic clubs at St. Mary's School are to supplement the overall academic program by providing students with opportunities to receive recognition for their outstanding academic achievements, their virtuous character, and their community service endeavors, and to give students opportunities to participate in interscholastic academic competitions such as the Southern Oregon Math Counts, Southern Oregon Math League, the Southern Oregon Brain Bowl League, and the Oregon High School Mock Trial Program, and Junior State.

The goals of the National Honor Society are to recognize and promote excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, character and citizenship. The goals of the other academic clubs are to develop students' understanding, skill, and performance in each subfield as well as in the case of Mock Trial and Junior State to enhance students' awareness and deepen their understanding of key social, political, economic, and cultural issues arising from their respective cases and discussions.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The clubs are organized into various groupings. The National Honor Society is organized into chapters that meet periodically throughout the year to conduct the club's business and track member progress. St. Mary's School's math teams features one middle school Mathcounts team, two upper-school junior varsity Southern Oregon Math League teams and two upper-school varsity Southern Oregon Math League teams. St. Mary's School also fields one middle-school brain bowl team, one freshman/sophomore brain bowl team, one junior/senior or master's level brain bowl team, and an NBC-5 Academic Challenge team. Mock trial fields one or two upper-school teams depending on student interest, and Junior State consists of one upper school team.

There is no formal scope and sequence for these clubs. The National Honor Society follows guidelines for chapters provided by the national organization. Mathcounts, a national middle-grades math enrichment program sponsored by, among others, the National Society of Professional Engineers and Lockheed Martin, provides materials for students to review and practice that develop higher-order thinking skills and problem-solving ability. The Mathcounts team practices once a week beginning in the fall and works up to local competition in February against a collection of schools who also field Mathcounts teams. Teams that do well advance to state and national competition. The St. Mary's math team reviews packets provided by the Southern Oregon Math League on various topics. Brain bowl is an academic team trivia

competition where groups of students answer questions in history, social studies, grammar, English literature, science, mathematics, art and culture, and miscellaneous other categories. Students review assorted questions sets from previous competitions and from various quiz books, as well as study topics depending on individual strengths and weaknesses to round out each team. Resources for mock trial are provided by the Classroom Law Project. Assorted materials are provided by the instructor for Junior State.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The guiding school program philosophy about how students learn informs the operation of clubs as well with the addition that students who are provided with opportunities for spirited competition and who develop a constructive team mentality can elevate their performance.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

Most clubs meet once a week during the competition season during Tuesday's hour-and-fifteen-minute "business person's lunch." However, some teams may meet more or less frequently than that depending on student preparation and advisor availability. The teaching philosophy of advisors is to instruct, guide, and encourage students to maximize their talents and help them to be responsible members of the team while recognizing that academic clubs are extra-curricular activities and that students have substantial academic workloads and other extra-curricular commitments. Therefore, advisors are often known for their flexibility in scheduling practices and adjusting practices to student needs.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

St. Mary's School's academic clubs fulfill the school mission by providing opportunities for students to develop their intellectual talents and leadership skills. Mock trial and Junior State also serve to prepare responsible local and national leaders who are familiar with important issue and able to make informed decisions. National Honor Society members must maintain academic excellence in order to remain members in good standing. In addition, they adopt a "sparrow" to support through fundraising and subsidized community service, fulfilling Christ's command to love and serve the poor.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The academic clubs at St. Mary's promote free and open inquiry in a number of ways. Participation in the clubs is voluntary, though NHS, the upper-school math team, and master's brain bowl have entrance requirements and/or qualifying tests to participate. Students who participate in each of the clubs can choose to play roles according to their areas of expertise. Mock trial students, for example, may choose whether to participate on the side of the plaintiff or defendant and their character role in the trial. Brain bowl participants may choose areas of knowledge to study.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The academic clubs at St. Mary's also support the ethical orientation of the school. The purpose of the NHS is to recognize excellence in scholarship, leadership, service, character and citizenship. The National Honor Society also requires additional community service hours for participation. Mock trial and Junior State serve to expose students to pressing issues and moral dilemmas which confront citizens and leaders today. All competitive clubs uphold the virtues of good sportsmanship as well.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

The clubs vary in the degree to which they provide students with exposure to diverse, multicultural perspectives. Two clubs that perform this function better than others are mock trial and Junior State. The 2006-07 mock trial case for example involved an episode of white supremacy directed against a minority immigrant and focused on the incendiary issue of racism in American society. Junior State issues also involve discussions of multi-cultural perspectives depending on the issue involved.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Technology is used to a limited degree by the academic clubs. Junior State participants utilize technology to research issues prior to their attendance at the conference. The brain bowl advisor routinely tapes televised Academic Challenge matches to show to students who might be unable to watch them when broadcast. Since these clubs utilize technology sparingly, they face few challenges in their utilization of technology.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

The academic clubs integrate with the overall curriculum in a number of ways. Middle school Mathcounts complements math skills and concepts taught in the middle school, just as middle school brain bowl requires students to demonstrate their knowledge in middle-school level subject areas. Upper school brain bowl and math team also overlap the curriculum to a large degree, and Junior State participants draw heavily on knowledge gleaned from their civics or Advanced Placement Government classes.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Human resources are determined by student need, faculty interest, and the desires of the administration. In all cases, experts in each field serve as chief advisors for each club.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

The budgets for the academic clubs are either separate or folded into departmental budgets. The budget mock trial, brain bowl and junior state, for example, have a separate budget, which includes funds for the purchase of training materials and transportation to events. The budget for upper school math teams is folded into the math department budget. The National Honor Society raises funds for its operations and shares its budget with the school's academic awards program.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The academic clubs currently have sufficient resources to meet their goals.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

By and large the effectiveness of the academic clubs is assessed by the level of student participation in and the performance of each club. The high school math team for example has consistently dominated competition in the Southern Oregon Math League which features a number of 4-A schools. During the 2007-08 season the mock trial team defeated its southern Oregon competition and qualified for state competition, and the master's brain bowl team captured the NBC-5 Academic Challenge title and won \$24,000 in college scholarship money in the process.

At its February 2008 ceremony, the school inducted 41 new members into the National Honor Society, bringing the total membership to some 110 students, nearly a quarter of the student body.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

Advisors of academic clubs have engaged in limited professional development over the past couple of years. During the summer of 2007, the mock trial coach led a group of students to Croatia to participate in an international mock trial competition. The advisor for the National Honor Society has relied on on-line resources provided by the national organization to facilitate management of the club. The Mathcounts coach relies on print materials provided by the Mathcounts organization. Brain bowl coaches have primarily acquired professional training by participating in competitions.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

St. Mary's School's academic clubs are widely popular and highly successful programs. The weaknesses of the program are the demands they place on full-time faculty during peak competition season. In addition, due to staffing, the small number of students participating and the overall cost of the program, the speech and debate program was suspended last year. For some of the clubs, dual advisors would help spread the workload among the faculty.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The program has no plan to address its current weaknesses; however, the recruitment of new faculty has provided some opportunities to provide assistance to veteran club advisors. In addition, a new faculty member will resurrect speech and debate during the 2008-09 year.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The academic clubs complement the overall school program well.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school should continue to explore ways to provide veteran faculty with supplemental assistance by considering dual advisors for some clubs.

Student Government and Non-Academic Clubs

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Jim Meyer (Chair), Kacey Dewing, Vincent Comerchero

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

St. Mary's School's student government and non-academic clubs provide students with the opportunity to develop leadership skills and participate in activities outside the classroom in their areas of interest. While the number of clubs varies from year to year, during the 2007-08 year, some thirteen non-academic clubs including student government were active on campus. These included student government, the Mr. St. Mary's Pageant Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Computer Gaming Club, Game Club, *Animé* Club, Film Club, Outdoor Club, InterAct, Asian Club, Chess Club, Astronomy Club, and the Indie Rock Club.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

Clubs are relatively loosely organized on campus, however there is a formal process for club creation. At the start of the year, students are invited by means of announcements at morning meetings to form clubs based on their interests. The process of formation involves finding a faculty advisor, composing a description of the club on an official club enrollment sheet, and receiving the approval of the administration. Most clubs meet weekly during the 75-minute business person's lunch period held each Tuesday, though some clubs meet at other times.

Since students and teachers create, lead, and organize clubs based on their individual interests, topics vary, and no formal curriculum or scope and sequence guides clubs and other activities.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The philosophy of learning behind clubs is that students learn well when they are interested in the subject, when they can collaborate and interact in small group settings, when they have appropriate and constructive faculty guidance, when they are engaged and having fun, and when they have opportunities to assume individual leadership roles and responsibilities.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

The philosophy behind club advising is undefined though generally collegial and collaborative in nature where advisors and students are seen as eager partners in a fun process of exploration and discovery.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Student government and non-academic clubs fulfill the school's mission by providing opportunities for students to pursue avenues of individual inquiry democratically and by giving them leadership opportunities.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

Since students and teachers participate in clubs voluntarily according to their interests, the clubs meet the PNAIS requirement of free and open inquiry well.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

The greatest benefit of student government and club participation probably comes in the realm of ethical development where students are given responsibility to assume adult-like roles and play the part of club leaders. The communication, organizational, and planning skills that students learn also reinforce the notions of good citizenship and responsibility that are intrinsic parts of the mission statement.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

Clubs promote multi-cultural perspective in a variety of ways. The student government and the Asian Club played an important role in organizing the Chinese New Year celebration held in Jacksonville, Oregon during the 2007-08 school year. Clubs also involve St. Mary's School's various exchange students who share their perspective at club gatherings.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

Although some clubs use technology, for most clubs it is neither a primary resource nor concern.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

Clubs generally operate autonomously from the academic program; however some clubs do complement the academic program. InterAct students, for instance, draw on their drama skills, and astronomy club members occasionally utilize their knowledge of physics in their meetings. The school has no plans to horizontally or vertically integrate clubs in the overall school program. They are seen primarily as enrichment activities.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

Staffing for clubs is primarily decided by teacher interest; however the desires of students, the wishes of the administration, and the needs of the school also play a role in staffing for clubs.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

Most clubs have no expenses or materials, and those which do have their expenses met by club participants.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

Not applicable.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

Generally, student participation in the club during the year or from year to year indicates its appeal and successful operation. There is no formal mechanism to evaluate the success of individual clubs.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

Most non-academic club advisors do not seek professional development for their club advising roles; however some teachers' professional development opportunities are applicable to their roles as club advisors. This is particularly the case with the astronomy club where the lead advisor has pursued numerous professional development opportunities involving telescopic research with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the National Jet Propulsion Laboratory. If faculty members are interested in activities outside their academic areas of expertise, they are free to pursue their interests through the Meaningful Faculty Evaluation process.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The strengths of the program are the wide variety of clubs offered, their diversity, and the degree to which they are creative, collaborative, and student-driven. The weaknesses of the program are that there is no formal process to evaluate club activities, sometimes clubs compete with students' other responsibilities, and students sometimes have difficulty committing to their clubs. However, the school believes that providing a rich and diverse club life is important for student

enrichment and satisfaction. Strengths and weaknesses were solicited from the faculty via e-mail.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The school has no plans to address the program's identified weaknesses.

- **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

Student Government and the non-academic clubs supplement the overall school program nicely.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school might consider ways to better educate club leaders and participants in what is involved in the successful operation of clubs and to evaluate them more formally.

Summer School

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Katie Miller

Good Practice #29: The school's program components stem from a set of guiding beliefs and assumptions about the ways that students learn.

29.1: What are your particular program's goals or objectives?

The long-term goal of the summer school program is to implement a summer program which generates new enrolling students and auxiliary income for the school.

The objectives for 2007-2008 included the following:

- To develop a Summer Quest mission statement based on who the school's clients are and how the school wants to serve them;
- To research, design and develop a brochure representative of the school;
- To develop an expenses budget including one-time costs and annual costs;
- To recruit "in-house" instructors for leading courses (instructors may create their own course which they are passionate about or lead a pre-designed course);
- To expand the number of courses offered, including a variety of academic, enrichment and sport courses; and
- To implement a weekly/ single course salary with incentives.

29.2: How is your particular program organized? (Please provide scope and sequence documents for academic departments or programs)

The program is designed and organized to meet the needs of students in three main areas. Academic courses offer students the opportunity to develop skills useful to gaining entrance into and to being successful in college. The enrichment courses give young students the opportunity to explore areas of interest through hands-on, interactive activities which challenge them to solve problems. Athletic courses are designed to promote physical fitness, develop skills, and foster teamwork. Students may choose to participate in either a team sport or physical activity course depending on their personal interest.

29.3: What beliefs about how students learn inform...

29.3.a: The design of your particular program?

The Summer Quest program is designed to fit the needs of students and the interests of the community by providing various academic, enrichment, and athletic offerings. The program is designed to promote open inquiry by engaging students in hands-on activities rather than by having students passively listen to lectures.

29.3.b: Your particular program's approaches to teaching?

Summer Quest programs are elective courses providing the students with opportunities to further explore their own interests. All classes are activity based, where students learn by participating in the activity.

29.4: In what way does your particular program...

29.4.a: Fulfill the school's mission?

Enrichment and academic courses promote intellectual curiosity through their design of allowing students to take newly acquired knowledge and develop it further with extensions. Often enrichment and athletic courses are designed to give students the opportunity to work together with others promoting communication, cooperation, and compromise.

29.4.b: Promote free and open inquiry?

The program's courses are designed to promote free and open inquiry by allowing students to experiment and apply current concepts by further developing lessons and applying them to achieve the objective. For example, in one course students are given the basic ideas of computer programming before they apply that knowledge to create their own video games.

29.4.c: Promote ethical development?

Many course offerings, including Lego Mindstorm Robotics and athletic courses, promote teamwork. This requires students to communicate, compromise, and collaborate effectively in order to be successful in overcoming the challenges of the course.

29.4.d: Provide diverse and multicultural perspectives, experiences, and materials?

At this time, course offerings do not focus on diverse and multicultural perspectives and materials. Eventually in the three- to five-year plan, courses will develop which focus on diversity and multiculturalism.

29.5: If technology is used in your particular program, how is it used and are there challenges your particular program faces regarding technology use?

The use of technology is spread throughout the summer program. Two classes rely on the use of computer programming. These two courses in particular require students to not only learn a computer language, but also require them to solve problem in order to achieve the desired outcome.

29.6: How is your particular program integrated with other school programs? Please give an example of that integration.

Athletic and sport programs give students opportunities to promote and develop their individual skills in a particular sport or in the physical fitness realm. Many of enrichment courses allow students the opportunity to take certain subjects and explore them further. In particular, the course Rocketry Blast Off allows students to study the science behind flight and rocketry, whereas during

the school year the focus of the sixth grade science unit is more on space exploration. Another example is the course titled Lego Mindstorm Robotics. In this course, students are introduced to a basic form of computer programs which gives them a visible outcome through the movement of a Lego robot. This particular course integrates the use of computer programming and problem solving with constructing a Lego robot. Academic programs are integrated with the college counseling program. In particular, the SAT Prep course offers students the opportunity to learn strategies and practice taking SAT batteries in order to enhance their performance on the SAT.

Good Practice #30: The school's program components are supported with sufficient resources to meet its goals.

30.1: What factors determine the distribution of human resources in your particular program?

The major factor in determining the distribution of human resources in the Summer Quest program is enrollment in the individual classes. All courses have to achieve a minimum number of participants in order for the course to be offered. If that number is not met, the course may be cancelled.

30.2: How are your particular program's instructional materials and equipment chosen and purchased?

When a course has reached the required number of students to run it, the instructional materials are purchased by either the summer program director or by the instructor. The purchase of the materials and equipment for an individual program discussed with the instructor and director in advance.

30.3: If your particular program does not have sufficient resources (e.g., personnel, materials and equipment) to meet its goals, what are the plans to address these deficiencies?

The majority of courses for Summer Quest only run if the income is greater than the expenses. Occasionally, with the development of a new course requiring the purchase of more supplies initially, the course will run at a loss for the first year.

Good Practice #31: The school is engaged in ongoing review, evaluation, and development of each of its program components.

31.1: How do you assess or evaluate whether your particular program is contributing to students' progress, learning, and development?

The summer program is not a remedial program, nor does the school offer remediation at this time. In enrichment courses, teachers personally evaluate whether students grasp and retain the concepts of the course through hands-on experiments and projects.

31.2: What professional development opportunities have faculty from your particular program attended in the past one to two years, and how have these experiences influenced the development of your program?

The program director attended an ISM conference during October of 2007. The conference specifically focused on the development of a summer program which would increase student participation and generate income. This conference helped the director to develop a solid foundation of ideas as she seeks to build the summer program.

31.3: What are your particular program's strengths and weaknesses, and how were they identified?

The summer program's particular weaknesses include its need to find its niche in the Rogue Valley, identify potential clientele, and provide them with a product which will encourage them to enroll during the regular school year.

The summer school director identified the above weaknesses.

31.4: What plans does your particular program have to address its identified weaknesses?

The school's effort to address its weaknesses in the area of its summer school program include Developing and distributing a survey to help identify the program's niche in the Valley by

- inquiring as to what types of courses are in demand;
- Continuing to focus on the growth of the program and marketing to clientele (this process may take a few years before the program is well established);
- Expanding the program to include younger age levels and more course offerings;
- As part of the marketing strategy, including teachers outside of the immediate school community (this will not only help with the establishment of the program in the community, but it may also draw highly motivated, enthusiastic teachers to the school during the regular school year).

• **What are the overall strengths in regard to the area of the school's program?**

The summer programs particular strengths are numerous and include the following observations:

- The number and longevity of established camps run by experienced coaches and instructors;
- Motivated, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and experienced instructors;
- A board of trustees committed to funding and further developing the program;
- A wide variety of course offerings including soccer, basketball, volleyball, rocketry, computer programming, engineering, art, theater, physical fitness, space science, babysitting certification, speed reading, and SAT prep; and
- A small offering of enrichment courses for adults in the evening

• **What overall recommendations does the school make in the area of the school's program?**

The school makes the following recommendation for Summer 2009:

- To research the feasibility of summer program software;
 - To increase course offerings to include younger ages (2nd grade-12th grades) and instructor numbers within and outside the school community) with the demand to include remedial upper school classes;
- To expand efforts to market the summer program by finalizing course offerings, staff, and
 - schedule in November, and by producing brochures featuring program offerings by January;
- To hire outside vendors from the community to teach or hold courses on campus, for example driver's education, dance courses, and other day activities;
- To implement outdoor and/or field trips into the course offerings if demand and numbers are available, and to make sure they are covered by insurance; and to
- To establish and organize a Summer Program Fair for early registration and marketing.

The school also seeks to expand the following benefits of the summer program to the school:

- Generate an auxiliary income for the school;
- Utilize current facilities;
- Expose community members to the school and improve its relationship with the community;
- Create a feeder program and generate new enrollment;
- Advance the school's mission statement;
- Advertise about the school and its program promoting the school's strengths;
- Identify new teacher hires;
- Generate additional employment income for current faculty members;
- Create community service opportunities for students;
- Develop and test new and/or innovative programs;
- Provide a service to current parents/families; and
- Provide remedial and/or advanced courses to students/families.

Administrative Practice and Personnel

This section is intended to assist in the review of the school's administrative structure and practices. The committee should include representatives of faculty, staff, and administration.

A member of the Visiting Team should meet with the officers of the Parents' Association and/or a representative group of parents and with representative alumni of the school or officers of the alumni association if one exists.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Chris Johnson (Chair), Wayne Healy, Margie Dode, John Ward, Alan McCreedy, Teresa Baumbach

Major Standard

The school has a qualified staff and an effective organizational structure to carry out school policy and to conduct the school program in accordance with its mission.

Good Practice #36: The school has the administrative staff and structure adequate to carry out the operational needs of the school

Element #36a: The School engages in ongoing development, review, and evaluation of school operations to meet the needs of the school.

36a.1: In what ways does the administration review its own practices? Who initiates this review and who is involved?

The administrative team reviews its own practices at regular weekly meetings, which are conducted in a round-table format. Each team member shares progress towards annual strategic goals, the current state of their respective departments, and any challenges that the department is facing. Periodically throughout the course of the year, the head will lead a review of the administrative strategic plan. This plan is derived directly from the board's strategic plan and is formally reviewed on an annual basis by the administrative team.

36a.2: What does the administration see as its major strengths and weaknesses, i.e. administrative structure, policies, and procedures?

The high level of collegiality among the members of the administrative team is a major strength. Members complement each others' strengths and skills, communicate openly and effectively, and are fully committed to a common vision for St. Mary's.

36a.3: From the perspective of the faculty and staff surveys conducted, what are the major strengths of the administration, i.e. administrative structure, policies, and procedures?

St. Mary's uses ISM's Faculty Culture Profile and Support Staff Culture Profile as a way to assess and gather feedback in a relatively informal and non-scientific manner. The major strengths of the administration as reported in the surveys include: high confidence in the division heads and head of school; demonstration among support staff that their actions are mission-driven; and administration support of faculty, parents, and students.

36a.4: What additional resources does the school need to accomplish its administrative goals?

The school has made good progress towards the strategic goal of reducing or eliminating the teaching responsibilities of the head and division heads. The middle school head teaches one section of seven students. However, the upper school head and head of school continue to have significant student loads, due entirely to their areas of expertise (religion).

36a.5: What problems does the school face in addressing the need for these additional resources?

The school has struggled historically to attract qualified instructors who are comfortable teaching in an independent Catholic school with a diverse student community that is located in southwestern Oregon. Medford's relative geographic isolation is a contributing factor. Reducing the teaching loads of the upper school head and head of school continues to be a strategic priority, and the school is working actively on it.

Element #36b: Provision is made for the appropriate participation of faculty and staff in the school's administrative planning and decision-making processes.

36b.1: List the kinds of faculty and staff meetings that regularly occur over the course of an academic year. What is their frequency? How is the agenda devised and what issues are discussed?

The entire St. Mary's faculty meets on Tuesday morning at 7:00 a.m. nearly every week. These meetings serve several purposes. First, they are often important vehicles for planning major upcoming events in the school calendar such as Back-to-School Night, Spring Day, standardized testing day, or an all-school retreat day. Secondly, faculty meetings highlight specific projects that teachers are working on in conjunction with the Meaningful Faculty Evaluation (MFE) program, such as last summer's debut trip to China or a recently proposed "winterim" program for the school. Faculty meetings can also be useful ways for teachers to disseminate information gleaned at recently attended conferences and workshops to the rest of the teaching staff, such as October's PNAIS All-schools Conference or last summer's Schools Attuned seminar. Occasionally, faculty meetings draw their themes from various other sources: ISM's Twenty Principles for Teaching Excellence or simply the promotion of faculty physical fitness. More than once, the faculty and staff have been convened simply to enjoy healthy refreshments and conversation while walking or jogging the St. Mary's track in the early morning sunshine.

The schedule and agenda for these meetings are drawn up by the head of school, the division heads, and the director of academic affairs. Once the specific topics for faculty meetings are decided upon early in the school year, a schedule is posted on the network drive.

Element #36c: The school has adequate staff and structure to fulfill the following administrative functions: Development/Alumni, Business, and Enrollment Management.

36c.1: Describe the goals and the staff organization for each administrative function. How are these goals developed?

In April of 2006, the school's administrative staff met to develop a strategic plan with the tutelage of Independent School Management (ISM). Development/alumni functions are handled by the advancement department, which includes the director of advancement, director of special events and annual giving, parent volunteer coordinator, director of alumni affairs, and director of advancement services.

Business functions are handled by the business manager.

Enrollment is managed by the director of admission and marketing.

The goals of each administrative function are developed by each administrative team annually and reviewed and approved by the head of school.

36c.2: Does each administrative function have its own long-range plan? If so, describe the planning and review process.

Each of the administrative functions has a five-year plan that is reviewed annually by the head of school with the administrators. This plan is derived from the school's strategic plan.

36c.3: Are the resources (personnel, funding, time, materials, and equipment) of each administrative function adequate to meet the department's goals. If not, why not?

Yes.

36c.4: Is the school's technology infrastructure adequate to meet the needs of each administrative function? If not, why not?

St. Mary's technological infrastructure is very adequate to meet the needs of each administrative function.

36c.5: Describe the communication between each administrative function and the following groups, as appropriate: members of the board of trustees, the school head and other academic administrators, other administrative departments, and the faculty.

The head of school and director of advancement meet monthly with the board of trustees to review any and all issues concerning the well being and operations of the school. The head of school meets weekly with the faculty to review activities and address school issues as needed.

The head of school meets weekly with the management team consisting of the upper school head, the middle school head, the business manager, the director of admission and marketing, and the director of advancement where general and specific issues are discussed and resolved. Administrative functions are communicated with faculty through the division heads and the head of school.

36c.6: Describe the communication between each administrative function and the following groups: the parents' association and the school's alumni.

St. Mary's does not have a parent association. Administrative communication with alumni is handled primarily by the advancement department under the direction of the director of advancement. The director of alumni affairs serves as a point of contact for alumni and maintains the "class notes" section of the school's quarterly publication, *The Messenger*. The director of annual giving and special events coordinates communication with alumni regarding annual giving, social events such as reunions, and opportunities to re-connect with the school.

The business and plant manager has no formal communication with the school's alumni.

The director of admission has no formal communication with the school's alumni but, as director of communication, assists with production of *The Messenger*.

36c.7: Describe the evaluation process by which the effectiveness of each administrative function department is measured.

St. Mary's uses the Excellence in Educational Leadership model provided by ISM. Members of the management team utilize the Management Team Evaluation instrument, which focuses on the execution of the Annual Administrative Agenda. The MTE is constructed to allow the administrator to use any process compatible with his or her "Style" of managing and leading. The head of school reviews the MTE for each member of the management team to ensure that the MTE is based on the year's administrative plan and is aligned with the head's annual goals. Formal staff performance evaluations are conducted annually with the employee's immediate supervisor. The evaluation consists of an optional reflective self-evaluation by the employee and a written evaluation by the supervisor as described in the *Employee Handbook*.

36c.8: Describe the growth of the school's fundraising base. (Development office only)

St. Mary's has had consistent growth in its fundraising base over the past few years. In 2003-04 the annual giving program had 302 donors, in 2004-05 it had 413 donors, and in 2005-06 it recorded 473 donors. In 2006-07 the number of donors dropped to 406, as the school focused its energies on raising the average gift size.

36c.9: Is the school seeking capital funds at this time? If so, describe the planning and purpose for this capital campaign. (Development office only)

Not applicable.

36c.10: What are the major strengths of each department?

The school benefits from a flat administrative structure, open communication between administrative departments, collegial working relationships between members of the management team, and a clear focus on the mission statement. The management team (see 36c.5 above) meets weekly, which encourages open discussion and communication. All administrative departments have an open-door policy.

36c.11: What recommendations does the school make for each department?

The school recommends that each member of the management team continue to focus carefully on his/her individual MFE goals and on the Annual Administrative Goals.

Good Practice #37: The school has clear hiring policies and protocols that are effectively communicated.

Element #37a: Faculty, administration, and staff members are qualified by preparation or experience.

37a.1: Describe the way in which faculty, staff, and administration are hired.

37a.1.a: How are positions advertised or posted?

Jobs are advertised in national consortiums publications such as those of the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools and National Association of Independent Schools. Local newspaper ads are used for recruiting coaches.

37a.1.b: What is the interview process?

The head of school and the division heads interview prospective faculty members. The head of school and the appropriate administrative department head interview potential new staff employees. Whenever possible, candidates from out of town are asked to come to the school for a visit, for interviews, and to meet members of the school community.

37a.1.c: How is the final decision on hiring made?

Hiring decisions are made by the head of school and other member of the management team. Decisions are based on the interview and written application.

37a.1.d: How is the effectiveness of the hiring process assessed?

The very low rate of turnover evidences a very effective hiring process.

37a.2: What criteria are used to determine the qualifications of candidates? How are these criteria assessed?

The qualifications criteria for faculty positions include academic background (bachelor's degree in a related required, graduate degree encouraged), classroom teaching experience and/or relevant work experience outside the classroom, and a philosophy of teaching that is compatible with the school's mission and culture. All are assessed on a multi-page employment application which requires written responses to the following questions:

1. St. Mary's School accepts mission-appropriate students with a wide range of academic abilities. Explain your approach to individualizing instruction, encouraging students, and helping them to discover their strengths and gifts.
2. Describe your classroom management style and philosophy. Give examples of why such a style makes your classroom a good place for students.
3. Explain your overarching philosophy on the role of grades. What is the purpose of grades? What are the effects of grades? What degree of subjectivity do you see in the process of grading?

37a.3: What orientation and mentoring is provided for new employees?

All new faculty members attend an orientation with the head of school and division heads during in-service week before the start of classes. The school does not have a formal mentoring program for new teachers. Instead, it relies on informal teaming of new teachers with colleagues in the same department or division and frequent check-ins with division heads

37a.4: What additional support and supervision is provided for those new to their profession?

The informal nature of the school's orientation and mentoring program allows the school the flexibility to best meet the needs of teachers (both those new to the profession and veterans). The school does not have a formal "new teacher" support program but, as with all new employees, creates an informal network of colleagues and administrators to support and encourage those new to the profession.

Element #37b: The school makes a concerted effort to address the issue of diversity through hiring of staff appropriate to its mission statement and its definition of diversity.

37b.1: Describe the school's goals regarding diversity in the faculty and staff and how the school plans to meet them.

The school looks at the most qualified applicants when making its selection on hiring new employees. St. Mary's is committed to creating an atmosphere of respect, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity within the school and greater community, as well as to instilling respect for human dignity in each member of the community. The mission statement, curriculum,

and policies regarding admission, financial aid, and overall school philosophy embrace the concept that we are all unique individuals who should be treated with dignity and respect regardless of economic, ethnic, religious, or philosophical differences. Therefore any applicant would need to embrace the above philosophy.

Good Practice #38: The school reviews its compliance with applicable federal and state laws regarding hiring and the maintenance of adequate personnel records.

38.1: Describe the process by which the school conducts background checks on new employees.

Every new hire undergoes a background check administered by payroll service (ADP) and the Oregon State Police. The two services provide driving records, criminal records, and sexual predator records.

38.2: Describe the contents of a personnel file.

Personnel files include termination records, acknowledgements, awards and commendations, evaluations, testing and education, job description and salary history, new hire documents, and application and resume.

38.3: Where are these files located?

Personnel files are located in a locked file cabinet in the school safe.

38.4: Who has access to them? What guidelines for access are provided?

The head of school and the business manager have access to them. There are no formal guidelines for access.

38.5: Who is responsible for maintenance of these records?

The head of school is responsible for the maintenance of these records and delegates access to and maintenance of the files to the business manager as needed.

38.6: How are the records physically secured against fire, misplacement, loss or unauthorized access?

Personnel files are kept in a two-drawer locked filing cabinet. While the walk-in safe does not have a fire proof rating, it is a vault constructed out of cement blocks and a tile floor and is locked every night.

38.7: What is the school's policy for the retention of personnel records?

All personnel files are kept in perpetuity.

Good Practice #39: The school has written personnel policies including descriptions of the evaluation and compensation systems.

Element #39a: The school carries out a system for supervision and evaluation of staff performance that is defined as to purposes (formative and summative) and that protects the individual's rights as well as the interests of the school in an ethical manner. The process is understood by members of the staff.

39a.1: Describe the system for supervision and evaluation of faculty, staff, and administration.

The school is in the second year of its implementation of ISM's *Meaningful Faculty Evaluation* (MFE) model. *Meaningful Faculty Evaluation* is a research-based system predicated on the idea that the core purpose of faculty evaluation is the improvement of faculty culture—those ideas, beliefs, and assumptions that shape the faculty's collective behaviors and practices. It is a long-term structured conversation between a teacher and his or her administrator about knowledge and behaviors that are positive “difference makers” for students.

On an annual basis, each faculty member completes a *Teaching Preferences and Objectives Sensor* that leads the individual through school and personal missions, areas of emphasis, and goal setting. The completed sensor is submitted to a designated administrator and, with administration approval, becomes a commitment.

The school uses a similar instrument for administrators called Management Team Evaluation, which is based on the strategic administrative plan for a given year and aligned with the head's goals for the year. Formal staff performance evaluations are conducted annually with the employee's immediate supervisor. The evaluation consists of an optional reflective self-evaluation by the employee and a written evaluation by the supervisor as described in the Employee Handbook.

39a.2: How well does the school practice the evaluation process here described?

The school is committed to the full implementation of MFE. The MFE model measures the efficacy of the program through a survey instrument called the *Faculty Culture Profile*. The FCP, a brief questionnaire completed by all faculty members, provides a snapshot of culture health and vitality and allows administrators to address any issues of concern. Additionally, the school began administering the *Student Culture Profile* in the fall of 2007 as a way to gauge the health of the faculty culture from a student perspective. The school also implemented the *Staff Culture Profile* in the spring of 2008.

39a.3: Describe the review and grievance procedures designed to address disagreement over performance assessment?

The school does not use a formal review and grievance process with regard to performance assessments. The entire administrative team has an open-door policy for all employees, and the school strives to ensure that all employees receive fair and equitable treatment.

Element #39b: The professional staff receives from the administration ongoing supervision and assistance designed to improve instruction.

39b.1: Describe the ways in which the administration provides ongoing supervision and assistance designed to improve instruction and performance.

Each teacher's MFE objectives are the driving and defining factors behind the character and type of supervision and assistance regarding the improvement of instruction. In addition, the head of school and division heads visit classes throughout the year. The purpose of these visits is not evaluative, but rather to offer feedback and to stay in touch with what is happening in classrooms. If a teacher's MFE objectives necessitate more frequent supervision, then the division heads provide it. The school provides funding for workshops and conferences, professional journals, and other development opportunities that align with the mission of the school and a teacher's MFE objectives.

Element #39c: The school has a fair and equitable compensation program.

39c.1: What is the school's compensation program and how was it determined?

Faculty compensation is based on a three-tiered system (new, mid-career, master) with ranges in each tier based on experience and academic degree background. Staff and administrative compensation is based on experience and skill set. Benefits include medical and dental coverage, short- and long-term disability, and a 403(b) plan administered by TIAA-CREF. All permanent employees who work at least thirty hours per week are eligible for benefits. In addition, benefit-eligible employees are provided a tuition discount for all of their children. Depending on his/her hire date, the employee may also be eligible for tuition grants to offset the remaining tuition cost for one child per year.

39c.2: How often has it been reviewed and are there plans for possible change?

The program was last reviewed in 2006. The strategic plan calls for review by the finance committee by January 31, 2009.

Good Practice #40: The school provides, on a regular basis, opportunities for staff professional development.

40.1: Describe the processes by which opportunities for staff professional development are encouraged.

The school provides regular opportunities for faculty professional development in a variety of ways and the school has a regular budget set aside for development opportunities.

Professional development is driven by ISM's meaningful faculty evaluation process. As part of that process, division heads may encourage instructors to seek professional development opportunities matching their focus, if applicable. Instructors who search out other opportunities speak with their MFE administrator. The division heads and head of school make opportunities known to teachers at regular faculty meetings. Teachers then meet with the head to determine the specifics of a development opportunity.

40.2: Describe the professional development opportunities (including conferences, publications, travel, and leave) in which faculty/staff have participated during the last two years. Provide specific examples of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff related to diversity.

Instructors from the school have participated in content area opportunities as well as opportunities to train with AP programs in Physics, German, Chemistry, and other subjects. Teachers have taken trips to work and study in Mexico and China. One instructor used her development funds to travel to the Middle East to film a documentary about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. She incorporated this new information in her course on the modern Middle East. Art department teachers have run the gamut from receiving instruction in precious-metal-clay casting techniques to attending an Art and Spirituality conference in Arizona. The administration recruited five instructors to attend an All Kinds of Minds conference last summer to help the school increase its ability to work with students. That core team has been educating the rest of the faculty on the use of the AKOM constructs.

40.3: What is the size of the school's professional development budget for each of the last two years?

The school has an adequate amount of funds devoted to professional development and during the past two years has been able to spend above the budgeted amount.

40.4: How does the allocation of these funds support the school's mission and philosophy?

The school directly supports its mission to provide free and open inquiry and to prepare and inspire leaders and responsible citizens. The school allocates its resources based on the ability of the proposal to make a positive difference in classroom instruction and on its congruence with the instructors' stated MFE objectives.

Good Practice #41: The school has an effective communication system in place to keep parents informed about the school's program and services.

41.1: What is the process for assuring full and timely communication of both routine information and situations of concern?

The school's goal is to use the website as the primary means of routine communication with parents. Parents are subscribed to the school's on-line calendar and receive, via email, weekly calendar summaries. In addition, the school also contacts parents via broadcast email. Communications regarding matters of concern are handled by letter via U.S. mail.

41.2: What is the school's communications system (print and electronic) and how can it be improved?

The school relies extensively on electronic communication with parents via broadcast email. The school can improve the effectiveness of this system by ensuring that all parents have given the school an email address.

Good Practice #42: The school has established policies and procedures for members of the school community to participate in the life of the school

Element #42a: Parents receive adequate orientation and are afforded opportunities to participate in appropriate school events and activities.

42a.1: Describe the ways in which the school orients and integrates its new families.

St. Mary's School hosts a variety of events at the start of each new school year in an attempt to reach out to new families and quickly integrate them into the school community. The new-family barbeque, held just prior to the start of school in the fall, allows new families to meet the school's administration and teaching staff in an informal and comfortable atmosphere. A separately scheduled ice cream social is held specifically for the incoming sixth graders and their families. Then, throughout the early months of the school year, the school schedules and hosts seven potluck "parent dinners." Each of these dinners gives parents of students in a particular grade level a chance to meet one another and socialize. Administrators, along with those who teach at the particular grade level, also attend these evening parent gatherings.

Warm invitations to these and other events are included in the packet of orientation materials that is sent home during the summer months prior to the start of school. Summer mailings are designed not only to make new families feel welcome but fully inform the entire community about important school events, policies, and new additions to the St. Mary's faculty. Included in the orientation packet is a form that invites new and existing parents to communicate any interests they might have in volunteering at the school.

Margie Dode, serving as the parent volunteer coordinator, records this information and makes sure that a parent's interest and willingness to volunteer at the school in a particular capacity is communicated to appropriate key personnel. Likewise, when a particular teacher or program director has need of volunteer help, the parent volunteer coordinator can assist in tapping into the larger parent community.

Although the parent volunteer coordinator serves as a vital and immediate link between the school and the parent community, she is by no means the only one. All of the school's administrators (head of school, upper school head, middle school head, director of admissions, and dean of academic affairs) are willing and able to devote great amounts of time to addressing parents, their concerns, and their desires to become more involved in the school's activities.

42a.2: In what ways does the school allow for parent participation in school events and activities?

St. Mary's School provides numerous avenues for parents to participate in school events and activities. In helping run the extensive athletic program, parents can participate in many ways: running the clock, timing the events at track meets, collecting money at the gate, serving as a line judge for volleyball matches, positioning the chain at football games, or directing racers at cross-country meets.

Assisting the athletic program is by no means the only way for parents to get involved in the school's activities. Parents are invited to join our Family Arts Network (the F.A.N. Club), a group focused on bringing together parents and members of the thriving Rogue Valley performing arts world to lend expertise, creativity, support, and professionalism to the students of St. Mary's who participate in any of the performing arts. Parents volunteers are always of great assistance when staging the particular concerts and musical productions, helping to build sets, design costumes, apply makeup, take tickets, and distribute programs.

Parents often serve as guest speakers in some classes and at special events such as Global Solutions Day (an event that showcases presentations that are centered on a relevant and important theme such as fostering global awareness). Parental help is also very instrumental in carrying off some of the school's big fundraising efforts. The big auction in the spring and the annual golf tournament both rely heavily on parent involvement.

42a.3: Describe briefly the parents' organization and activities: how they function, frequency and type of meetings, special purposes and projects.

At St. Mary's School, there is no formal "umbrella" parent organization (such as a PTA). However, there are numerous parent organizations that are important to the community in specific ways. For example, a St. Mary's Booster Club, run by a board of directors, provides a great deal of financial support for the school's athletic program. In sponsoring the annual golf tournament, the Booster Club has raised funds contributing to the purchase of team uniforms and the renovation of the school's locker room facilities.

The Family Arts Network (F.A.N. Club) is another school supporting organization that is primarily parent-run. Through their attendance at and participation in the planning and execution of the artistic offerings of St. Mary's students, the F.A.N. Club members establish robust relationships across the entire spectrum of the school community, and create an atmosphere of collegiality and respect for all performers.

Parents also serve as active members of the board of trustees, the St. Mary's Community Foundation Board, and the advancement committee.

42a.4: Describe the extent of parent participation in school life.

St. Mary's parents have many opportunities to share in the achievements and accomplishments of their students at the school. Throughout the year, there are numerous musical performances and drama productions that showcase our students' talents. The largest of these is the school's annual spring musical production that truly serves as a community-wide event in terms of parent, faculty, and student participation.

The parent community is also invited to attend the many other events hosted on our campus: the Masses and prayer services, the academic awards ceremonies, a special grandparent visitation day, a Spring Day variety and talent show, and the numerous athletic events that are sprinkled liberally throughout the school's calendar.

Parents can volunteer to go along on field trips such as the multi-day seventh grade trip to the Hancock Field Station or the eighth grade community service trip to the coast. In addition, the school offers parents some truly unique opportunities to travel overseas, as a parent chaperone on one of the many student travel trips or exchanges or simply as a participant on one of our faculty-led trips that are specifically offered to parents and alumni.

42a.5: From the perspective of the surveys conducted, what do parents feel are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of the school?

In the most recent Parent Culture Profile (Spring, 2008), the response from parents regarding their feelings toward St. Mary's School and the education the school provides was overwhelmingly positive. Nearly 92 percent of responding parents felt that St. Mary's provides high quality, committed teachers, and 91 percent of the respondents claimed their child is able to receive special assistance at school whenever he/she needs it. Parents rate St. Mary's teachers similarly highly for consistency in expectations, fairness in their grading practices, and wanting the students to do well. A full 97 percent of the parents responded that their child felt safe at school; not a single parent claimed that his/her child did not feel safe. According to parent survey results, students at St. Mary's students feel that they are academically challenged and that the school wholeheartedly supports their academic achievement. The administration is also viewed favorably as being competent, professional, and fair. Although St. Mary's is a Catholic school, 95 percent of the parent respondents considered St. Mary's to be a safe place for families of all religious backgrounds (or no religious background).

Any weaknesses discerned from the survey would have to be identified in strictly relative terms—weak in the sense that the response from parents was only slightly less positive. For instance, only 84 percent of the parents felt that there are strong partnerships between parents, teachers, and students at St. Mary's (8 percent disagreed). Only 78 percent felt that their child felt very much a part of the student community (10 percent felt otherwise). Only 80 percent of the parents viewed the teachers as communicating clear, uniform, and consistent expectations to their children (6 percent disagreed).

More detailed results of the most recent Parent Culture Profile (as well as the Student Culture Profile, the Student Community Survey, and the Student Course Survey) are available on-line by visiting the St. Mary's School website and clicking the “Parent” tab.

42a.6: In what ways did this input influence the school’s review and/or development of the overall school?

Both the Parent Survey and the Parent Culture Profile were administered for the very first time in 2007-2008. Consequently, though these tools provide information on how the school looks to the parent community at this point in time, it will be several years before any dynamic trends in the data can be discerned. Nevertheless, this does not stop the school from scrutinizing the numbers, establishing the weaker areas, and taking action to shore up those weaknesses while at the same time nurturing and expanding its areas of strength.

Element #42b: The school provides channels for parents to raise questions and/or express concerns.

42b.1: What channels are open for parents, students, faculty, and staff to reflect concerns?

Parents are encouraged to initially voice any concerns about their student's academic performance directly to the student's teacher(s). Personal communication by phone or email has proven to be the most effective way to improve academic performance. In like manner, concerns having to do with athletics are first directed to the head coach, then to our athletic director.

As a second avenue for voicing a concern, parents can contact their student's academic advisor, who serves as a valuable mediator or as an advocate for the student in many instances. Certainly, advisors can be good sources of information regarding interpretation of the school's rules and policy. If parents are concerned about their student's academic performance in numerous classes, advisors can initiate a more formal "staffing" process which involves the collection of feedback and suggestions from all of the student's teachers. This process results in a conference between the student, the parents, and the advisor at which the various teachers' written comments are reviewed and discussed. Strategies for academic improvement are proposed and finally decided upon.

Students with concerns should follow the same general course of action and take their concern directly to the particular teacher or coach as an initial means of getting an issue resolved, and enlisting the help of their advisor if that is deemed necessary.

The concerns of the faculty and staff can be addressed by working up through a loose "chain of command" that includes the heads for each department, the division heads (Jim Meyer for the upper school, Chris Johnson for the middle school), and, finally, Frank Phillips as head of school. Maintenance and custodial staff should voice concerns first to the plant manager, and then the head of school.

Everyone in the St. Mary's School community (students, parents, faculty and staff) is given the opportunity to participate in profile surveys that take place at least twice each year. These are chances for community members to rate the administration, the faculty, and school community in a variety of areas that range from faith and trust in the administration to the more general educational value that the school provides. The results of these surveys are tabulated and published on the school website for the review of the community members.

42b.2: What is the appeal process if a parent feels that a concern has not been resolved?

Parents always have very open and easy access to a number of school administrators: Margie Dode (parent volunteer coordinator), Chris Johnson (middle school head), James Meyer (upper school head), and Frank Phillips (head of school).

The final appeal rests with the head of school.

42b.3: What grievance policies are in place?

St. Mary's strives to ensure that all members of the community receive fair and equitable treatment, to provide teachers and employees with an easily accessible procedure for expressing dissatisfaction, and to foster sound employer-employee relations through open dialogue regarding any work-related problems. Employees are encouraged to use the process without fear of criticism or action being taken against them affecting job security, wage progression, or opportunity for job advancement. The process may be used to address concerns regarding the application, interpretation, or execution of any existing policies or school rules or similar serious individual or inter-group issues.

Guidelines for the process are as follows:

- Generally, the employee should first discuss and attempt to resolve the issue with either the individual involved and/or his or her immediate supervisor. This should be done as soon as possible after the problem situation occurs.
- If, after this initial discussion, more information is needed, or if time is required for reflection or consideration, a date will be set when the matter will be discussed again with the employee and a decision or next-steps will be communicated.
- It is the school's goal that this should generally be no more than ten working days.
- If the issue is not successfully resolved, the employee may bring the issue to the head of school's attention. A meeting will be scheduled commonly within 7-10 days of submitting the request—at which time the employee and head will discuss the continuing concern and the head will advise as to when an employee can expect to be notified of the final outcome of this issue.
- The head's decision will represent the final outcome of the matter.

In the case that the grievance involves sexual harassment, the person is encouraged to promptly report the alleged harassment to the head of school. If the complaint involves the head, such report should be made to the chairman of the board of trustees. A detailed description of further steps taken as a result of such a complaint is provided in the *Employee Handbook*.

42b.3.a: Where are they published?

Grievance or conflict resolution processes, harassment complaint procedures, employment policies, performance evaluation procedures, and other matters pertaining to employee relations are published annually in the St. Mary's School Employee Handbook.

42b.3.b: What is the mechanism for final appeal?

The final appeal rests with the head of school, Frank Phillips. If a complaint or grievance involves the head, the final appeal is redirected to the chairman of the board of trustees.

Element #42c: Alumni participate in the school community.

42c.1: What efforts have been made by the school to determine the effectiveness of the preparation of its graduates?

In 2006-2007, the school conducted an extensive college graduation survey of ten years' worth of St. Mary's graduates to assess where they went to college and how many years it took them to graduate. We discovered that 86 percent of the graduates who go to college graduate within five years. Additionally, the alumni submit information to Patrick Naumes relating news about their lives after graduating from St. Mary's; often this includes information about college successes. This information is published in *The Messenger*. Graduates also have ongoing relationships and correspondence with some of their teachers and administrators, keeping them apprised of events in their lives.

42c.2: How does the school encourage alumni participation in the life of the school beyond fundraising?

In the fall, for the homecoming football game, alumni are invited and given free admission to the game. The school also has a tailgate party for them and gives away a few St. Mary's mementos. During the Christmas break, the school hosts an annual Young Alum Party in which graduates from the past five years are invited to campus to visit with their teachers and peers while enjoying refreshments. They are also given free admission to a basketball game. In the fall immediately following graduation, St. Mary's graduates are sent a laundry bag with the school's logo to use while they are at college. When an alumna has a baby, the school sends her a "onesie" with "St. Mary's School" on the front of it. St. Mary's also has a Valentine's Club, composed of alumni who marry one another, and it currently has 50 couples in this club. Each year the school hosts a luncheon for alumni moms, and attendance increases each year. In the summer, the school hosts class reunions by decade, and frequently, members of the class plan the reunions. This year, St. Mary's is implementing an "Alumni of the Year" award, which will be given out at graduation. Alumni relations are a part of the school's overall strategic planning.

42c.3: How are alumni apprised of the developments within the school community?

The Messenger and the St. Mary's website are the two primary ways that the school communicate with its alumni. *The Messenger* features articles about current happenings at the school, and each edition also contains a feature story about one of the school's alumni. Another important element of keeping alumni informed is maintaining the school's database with current and accurate addresses for our alumni. In addition to having update forms in *The Messenger* and on the St. Mary's website, the school also utilizes return service on all correspondence.

42c.4: How do alumni contribute to the school's growth and development?

The school has an alumni chair for its annual giving campaign. The chair, in turn, instructs alumni captains to contact their classmates asking for contributions. Any time alumni provide the school with gifts of any kind, the head of school, director of development, and director of alumni relations personally write thank you notes within 24 hours of receipt of the gift. The school also involves alumni as presenters for special events such as Global Solutions Day and the Choices and Challenges program, and it also invites some of our alumni to come and speak to the upper school students. For example, a recent graduate who completed one tour of duty in Iraq with the Marines Corps and is currently serving a second spoke at an upper school morning

meeting about his experiences there. Some of the alumni participate in the Boosters Club, helping to raise funds to support the school's athletic programs, and both the Class of 1999 and the Class of 1966 contribute greatly to the Boosters Club.

42c.5: If the school conducted a survey of its alumni/ae, what did the alumni/ae feel are the greatest strengths and weaknesses of the school? In what ways did this input influence the school's review and/or development of the overall school?

This is a challenging question to answer because the responses of alumni would vary greatly depending on what decade they attended St. Mary's. The character of the school changed dramatically in the early 1980s when it adopted an AP-driven, college-preparatory curriculum. The school believes all would say that they received a solid education, and many would remark on the value of the community service they did while in high school and have continued into their adult lives. The school informally asked some of its alumni this question, and they remarked about the changes to the school. They noticed the warm and friendly relationships that exist between the students and the administrators, the financial and community support of athletics (Boosters Club), the "new" upper school building and improved facilities, huge improvements in the area of technology, and more course choices for students.

A more formal electronic survey administered in spring 2008 confirmed the degree to which the school is achieving its mission. An overwhelming number of the 143 alumni who responded to the survey felt that St. Mary's School provided a safe and secure learning environment, helped students gain important knowledge and skills in each subject, gave students opportunities to participate in meaningful extra-curricular activities, recognized all kinds of student achievement and accomplishment, offered students a high quality education, and prepared them well for college and the challenges they will face in the future. In addition, they felt that teachers held high expectations of students, challenged them to do their best, and helped them to become disciplined and creative thinkers. Alumni also felt that the school promoted free and open inquiry, provided an environment characterized by tolerance and respect for diversity, effectively taught the values of citizenship and community service, helped them to develop moral values, and instilled in them a passion for learning.

Alumni did not identify any particular weaknesses.

Good Practice #43: The School interacts constructively with the community in which it is located and avails itself of community resources.

43.1: For the purposes of this section, "community" is defined as the area within which the school has a perceptible effect. Define in your terms the community within which this school has a "perceptible effect." What is the effect?

For the purposes of this section, the community is the greater Medford area. Each year, upper school students perform thousands of hours of volunteer service in our area, from starting school supply programs for needy children to assisting at the Humane Society. The school is engaged in a long-term partnership with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Rogue Valley Council of Government to restore the riparian zone of Larson Creek, which flows through the school's property.

The school provides space for other non-profit youth organizations, including the summer programs for the Oregon Conservatory for the Performing Arts, the Rogue Valley Children's Choir, and the Britt Festivals Summer Music Institutes. The school's gym is used by the Medford Parks and Recreation Adult Basketball League. The school provides classroom space to the Medford Police Department each summer for its training and hiring programs. It also provides classroom space to the Mount Ashland Ski Patrol for its training program. In addition, Bear Creek Church uses the St. Mary's campus each Sunday for their worship services, Sunday school classes, and fellowship time.

43.2: What is the school's philosophy with regard to interaction with the community?

The value of community interaction follows directly from the school's mission statement. St. Mary's believes in the value of interacting with the Rogue Valley community by reaching out and performing community service as well as by opening its campus to the community. The school wants to be an integral part of the community.

43.3: How does the school contribute to the surrounding community?

Since the late 1980s, the school has asked its students to commit to meaningful community service. Today, as part of its mission to prepare students for responsible citizenship, every upper school student is required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of meaningful service to the greater community. St. Mary's students volunteer at a variety of non-profit agencies: Science Works, Red Cross, YMCA, Humane Society, Kids Unlimited, CATS, American Cancer Society, to name a few.

In addition, the school adopted a "sparrow" last year, which is a medically and financially needy child for whom students perform community service and a local business donates to the sparrow \$10 for every hour of community service up to 256 hours. The school also conducted small fundraisers to help its sparrow, and students have provided Thanksgiving food baskets and Christmas gifts for the past two years. Our sparrow was chosen for a mini-home makeover, and our students helped with painting and outdoor yard projects.

St. Mary's students serve as "lunch buddies" at Orchard Hill Elementary. They go one day per week during their lunch hour to serve as mentors for low income, at risk students; they also help work one-on-one with students in the classroom.

For the annual Chinese New Year Celebration in Jacksonville, St. Mary's faculty and students organize, prepare, and execute a variety of programs from a 5K running race to running Olympic games to serving food to making presentations on China. Essentially, without the help of St. Mary's students, this event might not take place.

This year, the school is expanding the courses offered in its summer school programs including offering some for adults. The program is not solely for St. Mary's families but rather will be open to everyone in the Rogue Valley.

43.4: What community resources does the school draw upon to contribute to the school program?

The St. Mary's performing arts department has ties with the nationally-renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival. This has opened up a world of professional theater expertise and workshops to the school's students, and vastly improved the quality of its dramatic instruction and the school's performances.

Orchard Hill Elementary provides the school with use of its fields and gymnasium for overflow practices for St. Mary's athletic teams.

The school also has initiated a merit scholarship program, and it is partnering with Asante, Providence Hospital, Harry & David, and Kids Unlimited in this venture.

43.5: What steps has the school taken to describe itself, its purposes and objectives to the local community?

Following the Ian Symmonds and Associates marketing assessment, and in consultation with ISM, the school rewrote its mission statement, and developed a portrait of a graduate and statement of professional excellence. The school is incorporating this information in all of its marketing materials.

Additionally, the director of admissions and marketing, whose degree is in marketing and advertising, has developed a long-range strategic marketing plan. The main thrust of this plan is to develop a community-wide understanding of St. Mary's "brand", e.g. its mission, via a variety of internal and external marketing efforts. A detailed version of this plan is available upon request by the team.

43.6: What are the major strengths of the school's interactions with the larger community? What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to issues of the school community?

St. Mary's is a "difference maker" in the Medford community. Its strong community service program and partnerships with other non-profits and governmental agencies demonstrate a commitment to living its mission in the community. The school should continue to work to fully implement its strategic marketing plan, which is central to strengthening ties to the community.

- **What are the school's strengths in the area of administrative practices and personnel?**

The school has a comprehensive strategic plan, the administrative team works very well together, and the school is actively involved in the local community.

- **What recommendations does the school make in the area of administrative practices and personnel?**

The school should work to further reduce the teaching load of the upper school head and head of school.

Students

This section is intended to assist in the review of the school's ability to attract mission appropriate students while also making sure the school meets the needs of its enrolled students. Committee participation by faculty and staff not involved in admissions and counseling would be beneficial.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Michelle Tresemer (Chair), Jim Meyer, Hal Wing, Chris Johnson, Rebecca Lovett, Kacey Dewing, Mike McGrath, Ashley Holton, Jake Sexton, Jessica Clement, Veronica Sagert, Zach Tomlinson, Sara Bayer

Major Standard

The school has defined those qualities that constitute a "mission appropriate" student, has established policies and procedures for enrollment management that are in keeping with federal non-discrimination regulations, and provides for the welfare of its students.

Good Practice #44: The school has an established enrollment management program.

Element #44a: The school has defined what constitutes a mission appropriate student

44a.1: How was this definition determined? By whom?

In general, the school seeks students who are eager to learn, inquisitive, creative, able to work productively with their peers and teachers, and who show a capacity to assume increasing responsibility for their learning as they progress through their school experience. St. Mary's values its partnership with parents, guardians, and other care givers and recognizes that the quality of a student's experience in school is directly related to that partnership. For these reasons, the school seeks students whose parents, guardians or other care givers support the school's values and goals and will be actively and productively involved in the lives of their students and the school. This definition, along with all admissions policies and procedures, was developed by the director of admissions, in collaboration with the head of school, and approved by the board of trustees.

44a.2: What steps are taken to assess the appropriateness of this definition?

The school has established the appropriateness of the definition above by committing to follow the NAIS Principles of Good Practice for Admissions and by approving the school's admissions policies and procedures at the board level.

44a.3: Describe what measures or predictors of success the admissions office uses in determining the appropriateness of an acceptable student?

In considering candidates for admission, the following criteria are used to determine the admissibility and appropriateness:

- 1) the likelihood of success in the school program;
- 2) the degree to which the applicant will benefit from and contribute to the life of the school;
- 3) the qualities and accomplishments of the applicant; and
- 4) the degree to which the applicant will contribute to the building of a particular grade level (and the entire student body).

This information is gleaned during an interview with the applicant, both alone and with the applicant's parents; the applicant's written responses to questions in the application; and the written responses of the applicant's parents.

Element #44b: The school has defined what constitutes a diverse student body in accordance with the school's mission and its geographic community. (See Good Practice #7)

44b.1: Describe the school's definition of diversity in ways that are meaningful to the school (e.g. race, ethnicity, ability, achievement, socio-economic background, special talents and interests, disabilities, parental education and occupation, exchange students, etc.).

The most effective educational environment is one characterized by a culture of inclusivity that welcomes differences of all kinds. Therefore, the school seeks to enroll in each grade level, and throughout the school, students who reflect a range of talents and socioeconomic and racial/ethnic backgrounds.

44b.2: Describe the school's goals regarding diversity in the student body.

It is the goal of the school to enroll a student body that is broadly representative, both socio-economically and ethnically, of the southern Rogue Valley and the cities of Medford and Ashland.

44b.3: Describe the population of the area(s) from which the school draws students, including the racial and ethnic composition of this population?

From a racial/ethnic perspective, the school's enrollment area is quite homogenous. The population is primarily white, with Hispanic/Latino the largest non-white group. The mean household income is projected to be \$63,584 in 2010, with the median income at \$46,843. The school conducted an extremely detailed market analysis in 2006, including a market segmentation, which provides the foundation for its current strategic and marketing plan.

44b.4: In what ways does the composition of the student body match the school's diversity goals? If these goals are not being met, what plans does the school have to meet these goals?

The school does not have specific, quantitative diversity goals. Instead, it seeks to make a St. Mary's education available to as many "mission-appropriate" students as possible. The school's targeted outreach to the Hispanic community, through partnership with Kids Unlimited and full scholarships, is consistent with that goal.

Element #44c: The school's procedures for admission of students are consistent with the stated purposes, objectives, and enrollment targets of the school.

44c.1: Outline the school's recruitment efforts highlighting those efforts that are most successful.

The school's recruitment efforts are multi-faceted. In addition to three Open Houses per year, the school uses direct mail and print media advertising, a four-year full-tuition merit scholarship competition for incoming freshmen, student participation in community events such as the Chinese New Year celebration, and partnerships with community youth organizations such as Kids Unlimited. The dramatically increased enrollment over the past few years can be attributed to a new head of School as well as offering unfunded financial aid.

44c.2: Describe the policies and procedures for the admission of students.

The goal of the school's admission process is to enroll students who will thrive in the school's program, benefiting from and contributing positively to the life of the school. As a 6-12 school, St. Mary's seeks students who can progress successfully through each division of the school to graduation. The challenging nature of the school program as well as the large number and high quality of its applicants, require the school to be selective in the admission process. In general, the school seeks students who are eager to learn, are inquisitive, are creative, are able to work productively with their peers and teachers, and show a capacity to assume increasing responsibility for their learning as they progress through their school experience. Criteria used to determine the admissibility of applicants have been listed in response to question 44a.3.

44c.3: In what ways does the school address the issue of diversity in its enrollment management program?

The most effective educational environment is one characterized by a culture of inclusivity that welcomes differences of all kinds. Therefore, the school seeks to enroll in each grade level, and throughout the school, students who reflect a range of diverse backgrounds and talents. Applicants who will increase the diversity of the school are considered a mission-critical constituency. As such, the school works closely with these families, taking the time to gather additional information and giving extra consideration to the students' applications. In addition, the school has several scholarships that specifically intended to increase diversity in the student body.

44c.4: What school qualities or characteristics attract pupils and their families to your school? How have you found out this information?

The five most important factors in attracting students to the school are (in decreasing order) personal attention to students, academic reputation, preparation for college, small class size, and

access to faculty. This information was obtained by a survey of current parents conducted as part of a 2006 marketing study.

44c.5: Describe this year's enrollment targets for each grade or age group. How were they determined and by whom?

Enrollment targets for the 2008-2009 are set by the head of school, division heads, and the director of admission. They are determined strategically, with the goal of first maintaining and then increasing enrollment, and also with an eye to application volume for each grade level. The school's targets for the middle school are two sections of sixth grade (30 students) and four sections each of seventh and eighth grades (120 students). In the upper school, the targets are four sections at ninth, eleventh, and twelfth grades and five sections of tenth grade, with section size between 15 and 18 students.

44c.6: If these targets were not reached, what plans are there for meeting these goals next year?

The school is in the process of implementing a strategic marketing plan, supported by the data included in the marketing study of 2006.

Element #44d: The school clearly communicates its procedures for admission of students.

44d.1: In what ways are these admission procedures clearly communicated?

The admission procedures are clearly delineated on the admissions section of the school website, in the print version of the application packet, and in the course of the admission interview.

44d.2: When were these publications last revised and what changes were made?

The design and layout of all admissions materials was revised in the summer of 2007, following an extensive marketing and branding study conducted by two nationally-respected firms.

Element #44e: The school clearly communicates the school's philosophy and offerings regarding financial aid and other financing options and has an established policy regarding the allocation of financial aid.

44e.1: What is the school's philosophy regarding its tuition financing options?

At St. Mary's, the tuition and fees charged to parents cover only a portion of the real cost of educating a student for a year. The school's endowment and donations from outside sources meet the difference. The primary responsibility for paying a student's tuition and fees at St. Mary's School rests with the family. The tuition grant program exists to supplement family resources when necessary, and is the only tuition financing option that the school offers. The goals of the St. Mary's Tuition Grant Policy are 1) to provide access to a St. Mary's education to qualified students who could not otherwise attend and whose attendance will enrich the school, and community and 2) to increase the socioeconomic diversity of the student body.

44e.2: Describe the various financing options offered by the school and the goals for each financing option?

Tuition grants include both grants made to families from the school, as well as scholarships for which the school applies on behalf of the student.

44e.3: Describe the school's policies, priorities, and procedures for the awarding of each financing option.

Parents of applicants must indicate they are interested in applying for a tuition grant by checking the appropriate box on the application form. Returning students receiving aid are automatically sent the necessary forms. Returning students not currently receiving aid who wish to apply for aid must request forms directly from the Office of Admission. All applications are completed on-line through Financial Aid for School Tuition (FAST), a service of Independent School Management. Parents may either request a brochure from the Admission Office or download the instructions once they have set up an account in FAST. St. Mary's requires that families apply every year for tuition grants, as both the financial resources of the family and school change annually. In early January, grant application materials are mailed to all families who indicate they wish to apply or who are currently receiving a grant. Included in this mailing is a timetable for applying and a checklist of all the materials that must be submitted. By March 15, parents are expected to have completed and filed the application through FAST. Supporting documentation is also to be submitted to the Business Office. All applicants are required to submit a photocopy of their 1040 with all schedules and W-2 statements for the prior tax year. If the tax return is not yet available, the school requires a copy of the IRS 4868 (extension). St. Mary's reserves the right to hold aid awards until all required forms are received and may alter financial aid awards if the figures presented on FAST are significantly different from the IRS 1040.

Additional documentation may be required in some cases. Examples include a photocopy of the student tax return if filed, a Business or Farm Financial Statement, or a financial statement for the non-custodial parent. Award notifications are mailed beginning on May 15. Tuition grant awards are valid for two weeks, after which they are subject to revocation. Parents are encouraged to call the Business Manager to discuss problems or concerns. Students whose families have applied for a tuition grant must be fully enrolled for the following year (signed the enrollment contract and paid the family registration fee) before the school will send out an award letter. If the school cannot meet a family's financial need, and the family subsequently chooses not to attend St. Mary's the following year, then the school will refund the family registration fee.

44e.4: What procedures are followed to be sure that these financing options are awarded in accordance with stated policies?

The goals of the St. Mary's Tuition Grant Policy are 1) to provide access to a St. Mary's education to qualified students who could not otherwise attend, and whose attendance will enrich the school and community and 2) to increase the socioeconomic diversity of the student body.

Tuition grant decisions are made by the director of admission, the tuition grant committee, and the head of school.

44e.5: In what ways are these financing options promoted?

Parents of applicants must indicate they are interested in applying for a tuition grant by checking the appropriate box on the application form. Returning students receiving aid are automatically sent the necessary forms. Returning students not currently receiving aid who wish to apply for aid must request forms directly from the office of admission. In addition, information about tuition grants can be found on the school website.

44e.6: Outline the school's tuition policies, including tuition insurance and/or refund policies. When and how are these policies made available to all parents?

Policies regarding tuition are sent to parents of current students in January, along with an enrollment contract for the following school year. The same policies are provided to new students, along with the enrollment contract for the following school year, when enrollment decisions are mailed, usually in early March. St. Mary's does not offer tuition insurance. The enrollment contract has no provision for refund after the beginning of the school year, regardless of family circumstances.

Element #44f: The school has established institutional (internal) research procedures for tracking admission and financial aid activity.

44f.1: Provide a chart showing the total enrollment at each grade level or age grouping, the number of inquiries, applications, acceptances, new students, and attrition for each level for each of the past five years. Comment on any admission or attrition trends and relevant information about the local context. (See Appendix B)

Between 2005 and 2006 there was a huge jump in inquiries, applications, acceptances and new students. There was also a jump in attrition. A new head of school was hired, a new admissions director came on board, and the school began giving unfunded financial aid which greatly increased the ability for families to come to St. Mary's. In April of 2006 an extensive marketing study was concluded, and the school was completely re-branded by June of 2007. The increase in enrollment is no doubt a result of all of these factors combined.

44f.2: Provide a chart showing the amount of need-based financial aid, merit awards, and tuition remission awarded in each grade, the number of students receiving each type of tuition discount, the average grant, and the number of new grants for each of the past three years. Comment on any trends and relevant information about the local context. (See Appendix C)

The school's comprehensive marketing study conducted by Ian Symmonds in 2005-06 determined that many families in the Rogue Valley who were interested in St. Mary's School could only partially afford St. Mary's tuition, hence the board's decision beginning in 2006-07 to

dramatically increase the amount of financial aid awarded and the percentage of students receiving aid.

44f.3: What percentage of the student body has received each tuition discount over the past three years?

Over the past three years 30.7 percent of the student body has received need-based financial aid, .1 percent received merit based awards, and 5.6 percent received remission awards.

Good Practice # 45: The school has developed the necessary services to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of its students.

Element #45a: The school provides adequate advising and makes provision for sufficient counseling, both personal and academic, to meet the needs of its students.

45a.1: Describe the goals and staff organization of each advising and counseling program. (Include secondary school and college counseling if not already addressed)

As is characteristic of most independent schools, St. Mary's has an advisory program for students at all grade levels. Students are grouped by division and assigned to a teacher in that particular division. In the middle school, each sixth grade section constitutes an advisor group, with the head teacher for that section as the advisor. Seventh and eighth grade students are assigned to one of eight mixed-grade groups. The goal of the advisory program in the middle school is to strengthen community among students, build and support positive and close student-teacher relationships, and to ensure that each student has at least one teacher who knows him or her well. Additionally, the advisor serves as a point of contact for parents with the school. Middle School advisor groups meet for fifteen minutes at the end of every school day.

In the upper school, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors are grouped together for advisory. Seniors split into groups according to gender and meet separately with faculty advisors. Upper school advisor groups meet once a week for thirty minutes. The focus of the group is mainly academic, so one of the primary roles of an upper school advisor is to monitor the academic progress of his or her advisees. Upper school students also work closely with the college counselor beginning in the sophomore year. The college counselor meets with each student and his or her parents to discuss the college search and application process, tracks the progress of each student, assembles and mails applications, and monitors acceptances.

45a.2: Describe the working relationship of each advisory and counseling program with the faculty of the school.

Advisory is an organic part of the school and faculty culture. All but a very small handful of teachers (primarily part-time employees) are advisors.

45a.3: What use does the school make of group and individual tests for purposes of advising and counseling?

Aside from using SAT, PSAT, and ACT results in the college search process, the school does not utilize group or individual testing for the purposes of advising or counseling.

45a.4: In what ways are students and parents made aware of the variety of future school options available?

As a college-preparatory school, the college search and application process is a significant feature of the upper school experience. In addition to meetings with each student, beginning in the junior year, the college counselor holds several evening programs for parents regarding the search process, as well as financing a college education.

45a.5: What issues are routinely addressed in scheduled group and/or individual sessions?

The advisory program in the upper school is primarily academic in focus. To the extent that these groups engage in whole-group discussions, they generally revolve around time management, study strategies, next-year course selection (in the springtime), and academic troubleshooting. In the middle school, the focus is primarily on building community. Advisory includes a conflict resolution and communication skills curriculum, with units presented throughout the school year.

45a.6: What provision is made for personal counseling?

The school does not provide personal counseling for students. However, the division heads regularly assist families in obtaining third-party professional counseling services for their students.

45a.7: In what ways do counseling and guidance personnel meet the varied needs of the diversity present in the school population?

The school does not provide counseling or advising based on racial, ethnic, or socio-economic background.

45a.8: How does the school support students as they address issues of personal development? Of sexuality?

It is the goal of the school to meet students “where they are,” support them as much as possible within the structure of the school program, encourage open communication within the student’s family, and to suggest professional third-party individual or family counseling when appropriate.

45a.9: What are the school’s policies concerning substance abuse?

The school’s policy with regard to substance abuse is clearly explained in the *Student/Parent Handbook*. Possession, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, tobacco, or tobacco products on campus or at a school-sponsored activity will lead to immediate disciplinary

action, including suspension or expulsion. Off-campus behaviors that bring adverse public attention to the school may be considered disciplinary matters and treated accordingly.

Element # 45b: There are clear and effective procedures for the assessment and communication of student progress.

45b.1: Explain how student achievement and behavior is assessed and communicated.

Information regarding student academic achievement is stored and communicated using a Senior Systems database. All teachers maintain an on-line grade book, and students and parents can access grade information through a secure website. The same is true for marking period grades and transcript information. Achievement is assessed through traditional classroom course grading.

45b.2: Describe the rationale for the type of report used to communicate student achievement.

The on-line access to daily and marking period grades was a significant selling point in the school's decision to adopt the Senior Systems platform. The school believes that the transparency and accountability that it provides for both students and teachers is a very positive step forward. Students receive letter grades in each class every 4 ½ weeks—that is, at the mid-quarter and quarter. In addition, each student receives a narrative comment concerning his or her progress in each class on these mid-quarter progress reports. The school believes that the more focused feedback of the narrative comment, given at the half-way point in the quarter, best helps students to improve their achievement and catch slipping grades before the formal quarterly marking period.

45b.3: If standardized tests or other school-wide assessment tools are used, how are they interpreted and for what purposes are they used?

The school administers the Stanford Achievement Test, together with the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, to all middle school students each spring. Eighth graders and sophomores take the International Schools Assessment each February, and freshmen and juniors take the PSAT in the fall. The results from the Stanford/OLSAT are used to provide a macro-level view of the curriculum and to help identify areas of programmatic weakness and strength. These results are also occasionally used to assess individual student progress, and to identify students who meet initial eligibility for the CTY program at Johns Hopkins University. International Schools Assessment results benchmark student internationally against the OECD curriculum standards developed for PISA. The school administered this test for the second time in 2008. The results will be more useful as a way of assessing our curriculum and students internationally with another year or two of results. The school's college counselor visits each section of juniors to discuss how to interpret the results of the PSAT. Parents also receive a copy of all standardized test scores in an easy-to-interpret format provided by the test vendor.

Element #45c: There are clear and effective processes for the reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities.

45c.1: How does the school learn of a student’s special needs or disability?

The school learns of a student special needs or disabilities either during the admissions process or, for students with an IEP, through the local school district. The school will also refer parents of current students to the local school district for testing and evaluation. For students with physical disabilities or limited mobility, the school is committed to the provisions of the ADA with regard to accessibility.

45c.2: How is information about a student’s disability used to determine whether reasonable accommodation is necessary to enable the student to meet the school’s requirements or access the school’s facilities and/or programs?

Information about a student’s special needs or disability is not a primary consideration in the admissions process. Rather, the director of admission (and often a division head) speaks openly with the prospective students and his/her family about the nature of the school, the limitations of the faculty, and the accommodations that the school considers to be usual and reasonable. These typically include extended time, one-on-one help with teachers outside of class, and supporting the work of third-party specialists who are working with the student outside of school. The school does not employ “learning specialists” or special education professionals and does not represent to be able to meet the recommendations or requirements of IEPs.

45c.3: What reasonable accommodations does the school make to meet the special needs of individual students with disabilities? How are parents or others involved in the process of deciding what reasonable accommodations should be made? How are the accommodations communicated to students, parents, and school staff?

The usual and reasonable accommodations for students whose learning disabilities are documented in an IEP include extended time on and modification of assignments, one-on-one help with teachers outside of class, supporting the work of third-party specialists retained by the student, and permitting the use of technological aids in classes. The school works together with students and families to determine what accommodations should be made, considering the school’s limited resources. These accommodations are typically communicated both personally and via email to parents, teachers, and staff.

45c.4: Does the school have any special programs or equipment specifically designed to reasonably accommodate the needs of students with disabilities? If so, please describe.

The school does not provide any special programs or equipment specifically designed to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities except those intended to improve access and to assist persons with limited mobility (elevators and ramps).

Good Practice #46: The school has a system for the maintenance of accurate records for both current and former students

46.1: Describe the contents of a student's current cumulative record file.

A student's cumulative record file contains injury reports, notes from home regarding attendance, immunization records, IEP or other special education documentation, records provided by a student's previous school, expired OSAA sports physicals, standardized test results, and admission application materials. Students who were enrolled prior to implementation of Senior Systems also have printed copies of grade reports.

46.2: Describe any records kept on groups of current students.

46.2.a: Where are these files located?

Student's cumulative files are kept in the safe in the front office. Student's testing scores from College Board exams (SAT, ACT, AP) are kept on transcript cards in the safe in the front office as well as input into the computer. Hard copy summary reports of the exams are kept in the Registrar's office. Copies are also kept in student files in the College Counselor's office. Hard copies of other exams we administer on-sight (PSAT, Stanford/OLSAT) are all kept in the Registrar's office as well as in student files in the College Counselor's office. International Schools Assessment Test reports are all kept on the computer only.

46.2.b: Who has access to them? What guidelines for access are provided?

The registrar, administrators, and department chairs and teachers have access to them by request to the registrar.

46.2.c: Who is responsible for maintenance of these records?

The registrar.

46.3: How are the records physically secured against fire, misplacement, loss or unauthorized access?

Records for current student and printed copies of transcripts for students who have left the school (either by graduation or any other reason) are kept in the school vault. While the vault is unlocked during the school day, it is located in a central, monitored area. Records for graduates are kept in boxes in a locked storage room adjacent to the Registrar's work area.

46.4: What is the school's policy for the retention of school records?

Cumulative records are maintained for six years and then destroyed. Transcripts (both in print and electronic form) are maintained forever.

46.5: What information is maintained in a student's permanent file?

A student's permanent file (that is, the file that the school would send to another school in response to a request for records) includes a transcript, standardized testing results, IEP or special education documentation, immunization record, and current OSAA sports physical (if applicable).

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to students?**

The admissions and financial aid procedures are straightforward and easy to understand and its newly instituted merit scholarship program has generated a great deal of interest and enthusiasm.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to students?**

The school should work to implement its strategic marketing plan.

School Plant

This section is intended to assist the school is reviewing the adequacy of its physical plant. The committee should include members of the faculty and administration.

Who was responsible for this section of the report? Chris Johnson (Chair), Wayne Healy, Scott Dewing, Bruce Chapman, Ryan Butler, Brock Cory

Major Standard

The school's plant is adequate to support the mission and program and is maintained in a way to assure a safe and healthy environment.

Good Practice #47: The school's buildings, equipment, and grounds are safe.

47.1: Describe the school's inspection of the facility, playground equipment, playfields, and vehicles.

The school's safety committee conducts an annual walk-around inspection of non-restricted areas of the facility, such as buildings and athletic facilities, using Oregon OSHA workplace safety guidelines as criteria. In addition, the safety committee meets monthly to address workplace safety concerns and to make recommendations.

47.2: Describe the school's policies and practices for compliance with OSHA standards, including safe seismic storage, labeling, and disposal of toxic materials. How and by whom are compliance decisions made, communicated, and implemented?

The school is committed to maintaining a safe workplace and to complying with all applicable Oregon OSHA standards. The school has significantly reduced its inventory of hazardous materials such as pesticides, paints, solvents, and other maintenance-related products over the last two years. Remaining materials, including gasoline and diesel fuel, are kept in small quantities and stored in compliance with label instructions and Oregon OSHA standards. All asbestos-containing materials and suspected asbestos-containing materials are monitored under a routine six-month surveillance plan in accordance with AHERA. Damaged ACM or suspected ACM are promptly abated by licensed contractors.

The school, as a matter of practice both operationally and in science labs, chooses the safest, least-toxic material for a particular application. Chemicals are kept in small quantities, monitored carefully, and stored and disposed of in accordance with OSHA and MSDS instructions.

Compliance decisions are made and communicated by business and plant manager, with some assistance from the current Middle School Head (who previously had this responsibility). Implementation is monitored by the Business and Plant Manager.

Element #47a: The school demonstrates that it meets code and regulatory standards related to the use of its physical plant.

47a.1: The school should review with the Visiting Team copies of recent reports related to the school's physical plant from any regulatory agency. If the school is out of compliance in any of these areas, the school should share its plans to gain compliance.

The school was subject to an OSHA compliance inspection in the spring of 2008. Two violations were noted: two surge protectors were "daisy-chained" together, and the school's safety committee had not met during a short period within the last three years. Both of these matters have been corrected. The reports will be available for the Visiting Team, if desired.

47a.2: Describe the school's processes for assuring that the school's buildings and facilities are in compliance with federal and state requirements regarding access for persons with disabilities.

The vast majority of the facility is at ground-level and includes ramps over door thresholds to assist persons in wheelchairs. Entrances that are not at ground-level are equipped with ramps. The city's design review process for significant remodel or new construction will help to ensure ADA compliance.

Good Practice #48: The school demonstrates an ability to sustain the school's current plant and location for a three to five year period, or alternatively, has a realistic and sustainable plan for change of plant or location.

48.1: Describe plans for the ongoing maintenance, replacement, or improvement of the current school facilities. Who is responsible for the oversight of these plans?

The "old" buildings on campus (the middle school, administrative building, multi-purpose room, and gymnasium) are all over forty years old. Along with the ongoing maintenance needs of the existing plant, which are dispatched and tracked using a web-native maintenance scheduling application, staff and/or vendors also conduct scheduled preventative maintenance and inspections on gutters, exterior lighting, all HVAC components (packaged units, hot water and steam generation, chiller plant, air handler distribution, fan boxes, and blowers), fields irrigation, fire sprinklers, elevators, and fire alarms. The business and plant manager is responsible for the oversight of these areas.

48.2: Does the school have a plan for changing its facilities within the next three to five years? If so, what are they? Describe the priorities of this plan and how they were developed.

Not applicable.

48.3: If the school leases its campus or facility, what are the terms of the lease and what are the plans for managing the lease? What are the constraints of the lease?

In 1998, the school entered in to a fifty-year lease with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Portland in Oregon on behalf of Sacred Heart Church. The continues through June 30, 2028. St. Mary's has a lease renewal option which if exercised shall commence on July 1, 2028 and extend through June 30, 2048.

The constraints of the lease are detailed in the lease document, which will be available for review on-site.

On August 31, 2007, St. Mary's entered into a one-year agreement with the Knights of Columbus to lease their facility at 772 Black Oak Drive, Medford, OR to provide for more classroom space. The lease includes the use of the large activity room approximately 1,440 sq. ft., the foyer approximately 290 sq. ft., the outside patio, the two restrooms, the parking lot, and the use of the tables and chairs located on the property. St. Mary's has exclusive right to use the premises from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday.

Good Practice #49: The school demonstrates long-range facilities planning that is incorporated into the school's strategic and long-range financial plans and addresses plant maintenance, improvement or expansion as correlated with projected enrollment, program growth, or institutional development and change. (See Institutional Leadership Good Practice #18 and Finance Good Practice #22)

49.1: Describe the respective roles of the administrative staff and the governing body in relation to decisions affecting the physical plant.

Responsibility for routine and regular decisions with a limited cost factor rests primarily with the business and plant manager. Larger-scale issues are discussed with the head of school and other members of the administrative team, including division heads. Projects or issues with a significant cost factor are approved by the finance committee of the board prior to implementation.

49.2: What are the long-range facilities issues facing the school?

The long-range facilities issues facing the older section of the school are typical of what one would expect in an older physical plant, including ageing breezeway roofs and drainage systems, energy-inefficient light fixtures, a steam generation and distribution system nearing the end of its projected life cycle, and energy-inefficient windows.

Element #49a: The school demonstrates annual and long-range budgeting practices and adequate asset allocation to support plant occupancy, maintenance, and safety.

49a.1: Discuss the functional adequacy of the physical plant and its appropriateness to the educational program of the school.

Fundamentally, the physical plant is adequate and appropriate for the school's mission and educational program. Increased enrollment is pushing classroom and public space capacity, and the board has recognized the need for capital expansion and acted upon it. However, the administration bears in mind that the school has not only survived, but flourished with the

existing plant. Regular and ongoing maintenance efforts, along with consistent cleaning and upkeep, can keep the campus functional indefinitely.

- **What are the school’s overall strengths in regard to the school plant?**

The administration and board is aware of the challenges of aging plant and is addressing them as the budget allows. The physical plant is safe, functional, and well-maintained, and the school has flourished with the existing plant, in spite of its issues. The playing fields and athletic facilities are of high-quality for a school of St. Mary’s enrollment.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the school plant?**

The school should continue to upgrade the “old” campus to improve energy efficiency and aesthetics.

Health and Safety

This section is intended to assist in the review of policies and practices related to health and safety. The committee should include those who are involved with health and safety issues both on campus and off campus.

It is recommended that schools that have extensive outdoor/wilderness programs request a safety audit through the PNAIS Outdoor Safety Committee schools within two years of the visit and submit that report along with the self study. Alternatively, it is recommended that the school request a person with outdoor education expertise be included on the visiting team.

Who was responsible for this section? Chris Johnson (Chair), James Joy, Wayne Healy, Katie Miller, Bruce Chapman

Major Standard

The school has established and effectively implemented policies and procedures that ensure a safe and healthy school environment.

Good Practice #50: The school has written emergency response and crisis procedures and practices them.

50.1: Describe preparations for emergency response in the event of natural disaster, traumatic event, or other crises.

The school has developed a comprehensive set of emergency procedures to guide its response in the event of medical emergency, fire, intruders, natural disaster, and other unfortunate events. These procedures are posted in every public space on the campus.

50.2: Who is responsible for the oversight of these procedures and how are faculty and staff trained in these procedures?

The administration, in particular the middle school head by virtue of his background as a firefighter-EMT, is responsible for oversight and implementation of these procedures. The plans are reviewed with all faculty and staff during in-service sessions each August. The school conducts monthly fire evacuation drills pursuant to Oregon law.

Good Practice #51: The school has written procedures to deal with injury and illness that are clearly understood by faculty, staff, parents, and students as appropriate.

51.1: In what ways does the school collect medical information for each student?

Every student is required to have a completed "Information Update and Emergency Release" form on file before the start of school. This form provides contact emergency contact information and pertinent medical history, including current medications and allergies, and a

treatment authorization. Students who participate in interscholastic athletics through the school are required to have a completed sports physical form on file prior to starting practice. The physical exam must conform to standards set by the Oregon School Activities Association and findings must be noted on a standard OSAA form.

51.2: Describe the school's procedure for dealing with injuries and sudden illness. What are the ordinary first-aid procedures? Who is responsible for treating minor injuries and for determining a course of action in the case of more serious ones? What provision does the school make for a student who becomes sick during the school day?

The school's procedures for dealing with injuries and sudden illness are addressed in the Emergency Procedures flip-chart. In the event of a medical emergency requiring immediate assistance, bystanders are instructed to call 9-1-1, then call the front desk, and then to render care to the best of their ability. In the event of less-serious injury or illness, bystanders are instructed to call the front desk for assistance. Treatment of minor injuries and management of more serious events is generally referred to the middle school head (a firefighter-EMT) or, in his absence, one of the middle school science teachers (both of whom are American Red Cross First Aid and CPR instructors). Students who become ill during the day are released to their parents and taken home, as the school does not have an infirmary.

Good Practice #52: The school regularly reviews procedures dealing with health and safety.

52.1: How are health and safety plans documented, reviewed, updated?

The *Emergency Procedures Guide* is fairly comprehensive. In addition, the school has a formal and extensive health and safety program that includes a safety committee, quarterly physical plant safety inspections, accident investigations, orientation and training, procedures, and adequate resources to implement the procedures. This program is provided in its entirety to all employees in the *Employee Handbook* and is reviewed with them annually in August. The plans were reviewed with an Oregon OSHA consultant in 2006 to ensure compliance with state and federal workplace safety laws.

52.2: In what ways are staff made aware of and trained in these procedures?

A review of workplace safety policies and emergency procedures is part of in-service training for all employees each August. Attendance records are kept for all training sessions. In addition, all employees have a complete copy of the health and safety program in their *Employee Handbook*.

52.3: In what ways are faculty educated about the need to comply with local and state child protection guidelines?

All faculty and staff are educated about their role as "mandatory reporters" of suspected child abuse and neglect during August in-service. This policy is also included in the *Employee Handbook*. In addition, the school is required by statute to provide annual training in addressing suspected sexual abuse of children.

Element #52a: Adequate provision is made for the health care and safety of students while involved in school activities.

52a.1: What policies and procedures are in place to assure the health and safety of students within the school?

St. Mary's is committed to providing a safe environment for students, guests, and employees. In addition to the general safety rules noted in the *Employee Handbook*, adult supervision during break and lunch periods is critical to ensuring student health and safety, particularly in enforcing our "No Running" policy.

52a.2: Describe the policies and procedures for the storage and administration of medication for students.

Any student who will be taking medication at school (either self-administered or staff-administered) is required to complete an "Authorization for Medication Administration by School Personnel." This form includes specific instructions, including the name of the medication, dosage, route of administration, frequency, start and end dates, physician direction, and parent release and signature. Staff members log all medication administration, and all medications (except for those that are self-administered) are kept in the school vault.

52a.3: Are first aid supplies readily available?

First aid supplies are readily available on campus. Well-stocked bags are kept in the library, the upstairs faculty room, the boys' locker room, and the office. In addition, all coaches have a bag of sports-specific medical supplies at practices and games. The school owns an AED, which is located in the main gymnasium.

52a.4: Various off-campus activities (e.g. outdoor/experiential education, field trips) often have health/safety concerns that are different from the general health/safety concerns within the school. These activities deserve their own plan and evaluation. Briefly describe each of these programs including the following information:

- **policies and procedures specifically related to these programs, including periodic in-house safety reviews, accident reporting procedures and documentation, and insurance coverage**
- **procedures for review of appropriateness, safety, condition and upkeep of equipment including vehicles, and/or facilities used for such programs**
- **policies regarding transportation for these activities**
- **procedures for contacting parents in emergency situations**
- **methods of review and evaluation of the health and safety of these programs**

St. Mary's is the chartered organization for a Boy Scout venture crew and for a Boy Scout and a Girl Scout troop. All outdoor programs at St. Mary's take place and are organized under the

auspices of these organizations. Applicable health and safety guidelines are provided in the “Guide to Safe Scouting” published by the Boy Scouts of America.

Both the seventh and eighth grade students have one multi-day field trip per year. The “experiential” component of both trips (such as strenuous outdoor activity) is fairly limited. The seventh grade visits a natural history field station in north-central Oregon, which includes light hiking in a high desert environment. The eighth grade visits a retreat center on the north Oregon coast and works on a service project at a state park near the center. Neither of these trips presents significant risk-management concerns over and above the regular school experience. Transportation on both trips is by charter coach. Both facilities are permanent, well-maintained and staffed, and utilized year-round by a wide variety of groups. The sophomore World Religions classes take a weekend trip to San Francisco twice a year to visit various places of worship. Transportation is by rental vehicle driven by school employees, and lodging is at an urban youth hostel.

Students are required to return a signed “Trip Information and Consent” form for every field trip or off-campus school or class event (such as retreats). This form includes emergency contact information, pertinent medical history, and a parental consent and release.

52a.6: If there are school vehicles used to transport students, are they and their use in compliance with current state and federal law and codes? If not, describe the school’s plan to meet standards and codes. Describe the safety measures that drivers and passengers must follow and the means of ensuring that the vehicles are safely maintained and that drivers are properly trained and licensed.

The school does not own any vehicles that are used for student transportation. Instead, the school contracts with a local charter carrier to provide transportation. Under current Oregon administrative rules, common passenger carriers can be used for student transportation if they meet certain guidelines with regard to equipment documentation and history. For smaller-scale trips, the school uses rental vehicles operated by its employees.

52a.7: If the school had a safety audit performed by the PNAIS Outdoor Safety Committee, describe the steps taken to address the major issues outlined in this report.

Not applicable.

Good Practice #53: The school provides adequate supervision and instruction to reduce hazards to health and safety.

53.1: Indicate how the students are supervised within the buildings, on the playgrounds, and as they come and go from the campus.

The campus is fairly compact, which makes informal student supervision throughout the school day almost continuous. Faculty members are assigned supervision responsibilities (both indoors and outdoors) during lunch periods only. The middle school head monitors the driveway and front parking area during pick-up at the end of the school day.

53.2: How does the school regulate traffic on or near the campus? Describe student drop-off and pick-up procedures and how these procedures provide for the safety of students.

The school has a drive-through parking lot and does not regulate traffic outside the campus. There is a well-marked crosswalk adjacent to the campus. To help regulate on-campus traffic, the school uses sandwich-style signs to denote drop-off zones in the parking lot. In addition, the middle school is dismissed fifteen minutes prior to the upper school, which greatly reduces traffic congestion and safety hazards at the end of the school day.

53.3: List the school's guidelines regarding safe student conduct on playgrounds and athletic fields. Describe other means the school employs to create awareness of safety rules, to prevent injury, to identify and remove hazards, etc.

The school's safety guidelines with regard to safe student conduct are fairly common-sense and straightforward: no running in corridors, shoes must be worn at all times, and stay out of off-limits areas (such as mechanical areas, the creek, and the parking lot). General safety guidelines are reviewed during August orientation and as needed throughout the year. A list of off-limits areas is included in the *Student/Parent Handbook*. Maintenance and administrative staff promptly mark any temporary hazards (such as standing water or slippery areas) and all employees and students are encouraged to report hazards that they see. Hazards that cannot be mitigated or adequately managed are removed. The school's health and safety plan is described in response 52.1 and in the *Employee Handbook*.

53.4: Describe the health and safety training programs offered to and required of faculty and staff.

All employees are required to attend annual refresher training on workplace safety and emergency procedures. All eighth grade students take an American Red Cross First Aid and CPR class as part of the health curriculum. All sports coaches who are not independently licensed health care providers (such as physicians, emergency medical technicians, and registered nurses) are required to maintain current American Red Cross Sports Safety Training and CPR certifications. The school provides this training to all coaches prior to employment.

- **What are the school's overall strengths in regard to the area of health and safety?**

A comprehensive emergency response plan is available throughout the campus, the small size of which aids in supervision of students. All coaches are required to hold American Red Cross Sports Safety Training certification.

- **What overall recommendations does the school make with regard to the area of health and safety?**

The school could provide first aid/CPR training opportunities for employees.