



Cover Form for Annual Progress Report

Complete the following as an introduction to your school's Annual Progress Report.

School Name: **Divine Mercy Catholic School**

City: **Faribault, MN**

Head of School/Principal Name: **Regina Ashley**

Number of years as Principal/Head of this School **8**

Was the Principal/Head of School involved in the development of the SSP? YES NO
If not, explain why:

Was the Principal/Head of School the primary author of this report? YES NO
If not, explain who was: However, it was done in committee with SAC members, parent representation and staff as well.

Enrollment at the end of the academic year 2019-20: *(Annual Dues statements for 2020-21 will be sent after July 1st based on your school's closing enrollment for this year.)*

Total Enrollment Grades K-12 198

(If your school's preschool was accredited by MNSAA during the 2019-20 academic year or before, provide enrollment below.)

MNSAA Accredited Preschool Enrollment _____

Member Since *(See Certificate)* **1990**

Year in the MNSAA Accreditation Cycle: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Self-Study

Onsite Visit Extension (Explain):

By checking this box, I hereby declare that the information provided in this Annual Progress Report is an accurate representation of the school improvement and progress achieved during the 2019-20 academic year. I verify that all required documentation is on file in the school and available for review by appropriate authorities.

Name Regina Ashley Title Principal

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2019-20 Executive Summary

Insert your 2019-20 Executive Summary below that summarizes the past school year. Highlight things such as: any unique situations encountered; major accomplishments; and/or significant revisions made to the school strategic plan.

The 2019-2020 school year will be one for the record books. What started as a 'normal' school year quickly turned into a great test of our ability to serve our community through crisis. As I look at the year in retrospect, it is hard to think about things in any way but 'before COVID' and 'after COVID'.

Before COVID we began the year with a smaller population due to a large exodus of students from our outgoing 5th grade class of 2018-2019 (15 of them) who took their siblings with them (9 students). When looking into this, problems with the transition into the Catholic middle school across the street were given as reasoning for many of the families. This is a challenge for us as our school has always been closely linked to Bethlehem Academy and the challenges that parents were facing were things that I could not control. I am hopeful that a new administration coming on board next year will provide the opportunity to dialogue about the issues and help to solve them.

We began the school year working on meeting the needs of our diverse learners through trainings on remedial and enrichment strategies, protocol for identification of students, and the formation of a student support team. This was going extremely well. We were working with teachers to help solve problems and working through the challenges of building consensus on protocol for identifying children for enrichment levels.

I had three new teachers who were beginning to flourish with the mentoring program and regular feedback. Staff morale was good. The Positivity Project and Responsive Classroom training were providing great opportunities for positive energy to flow from the teachers to the students. The school year was going very well and progress was being made in all areas.

Then COVID hit. We came back from Spring Break on March 16th, and in three days we had students switched to distance learning. It was helpful to us that we had already developed platforms for use on snow days and that our students have one to one device access from 3rd grade on.

My teachers worked extremely hard in keeping students connected and on track with their learning. We ran childcare for preschool and school age students of essential workers and provided grab and go meals to any family that requested them. Morning announcements were provided daily via a YouTube video and communication with families was put into high gear.

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The period of emergency distance learning taught us many lessons about the strength of our community and the resilience of our staff and students. Educationally it was not ideal. Many students did well through out this time, but we also tracked students who did not flourish under this type of instruction.

In response, we have organized and will implement anDue t intensive summer academic intervention program to those students identified. This will be delivered in very small groups in face to face format following the CDC guidance out at the end of June and into July. Our summer care programs at both the school age and preschool levels are open and running smoothly. It has been a gift to me as an administrator to have had programs in operation throughout the pandemic. I already have experience with protocols and group sizing that will translate into beginning school again in the fall. Working through issues all through this time has given me the confidence needed to step out in faith when the students return. I believe we can do this and do it safely and well.

Due to the extended period of school closure associated with the pandemic, I have had to adjust timelines on my strategic plan. I look forward to renewing the work that had been started this school year and completing some of the steps that had been put on hold. The greatest challenge for us continues to be our need for a new facility and now the postponement of the capital campaign. The commitment to the project is still there, the timing is just not right. We will, however, keep our Vision of Hope set on the future and continue to work tirelessly to achieve this goal.

Divine Mercy Catholic School ends this year poised to take on whatever challenge comes our way. Enrollment is down again slightly due to the hesitation about what fall will bring, however, we have two months left before fall hits and much can change in that process.

Submitted by Name **Regina Ashley** *Title* **Principal**

Preschool Addendum (for MNSAA Accredited Preschools only)

MNSAA accredited preschools are required to submit a copy of your DHS license annually. Please attach in addition to the other requirements of the APR.

Report the date of your preschool's most recent DHS visit and review:

Check if your MNSAA accredited preschool was visited by DHS during the 2019-20 academic year.

If your preschool was visited by the DHS during the 2019-20 academic year, attach the following as PDF documents (string with your preschool license):

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1. A copy of the 2019-20 DHS visit report
2. A copy of your school's response to the 2019-20 DHS report

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2019-20 School Strategic Plan (SSP)

Update your School Strategic Plan with progress reports and any additional strategies and/or action steps needed to keep the plan relevant. *(²⁰¹⁹⁻²⁰Use green font...)* Save as a pdf document and upload to your school's portal or email smueller@mnsaa.org as a separate attachment.

NOTE: MNSAA understands that your school likely experienced unexpected disruption to your improvement plans during these unprecedented times. Annual Progress Report reviewers anticipate there may be significant changes in your timeframes defined for action steps. Please amend as necessary.



2019-20 Communication of the SSP

4.07 ANNUAL REPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS: The school annually provides a state-of-the-school report to stakeholders that at a minimum communicates progress on strategic initiatives and plans for future improvement. A quality state-of-the-school report will include assessment results, use of financial resources and enrollment trends.

In the space below, provide a written description of how your school communicated the SSP, its defined improvement initiatives, and progress made with stakeholders.

Our SSP is posted on the school website annually. The time line shows the strategic items being worked on in the current school year. It is also communicated with the State of the School Report where the individual initiatives are outlined and progress made is reported on. We also send the SSP out as a pdf attachment to our school enews annually when the accreditation report is completed.

Save your "State-of-the-School" report as a pdf document and upload through your school's portal or email directly to smueller@mnsaa.org as a separate document. This report must include a summary of SSP progress. At a minimum, it provides evidence that your stakeholders were advised of progress achieved on strategically planned improvement initiatives and the school's plan for future improvement.

Additionally, a quality State-of-the-School report could include items such as:

- Assessment data and use
- Financials
- Enrollment

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5.10 SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE: The school's professional development plan supports on-going training in areas such as curriculum, instruction and assessment strategies that result in high levels of student achievement.

Evidence of Compliance: written professional development plan; evidence of the implementation of the professional development plan; official staff professional development report; assessment tools for determining professional development needs; policy; availability of professional publications and resources; minutes (staff, curriculum development); membership in professional organizations

*In your 2019-20 Annual Progress Report, MNSAA is seeking to learn more about your **school's professional development plan** that supports on-going training in areas such as curriculum, instruction and assessment strategies.*

In the space below, provide a written description of your school's professional development plan or attach your school's professional development plan.

OR

In the space below, provide a written description of how your school collaboratively responded to distance learning in 2020?

Our staff development plan at Divine Mercy Catholic School is focused on the following:

1. a deeper understanding of the NWEA Map assessment and its use to drive curricular decisions and differentiation.
2. exceptional learners on both ends of the spectrum and the strategies needed to tailor instruction for them.
3. technology integration in all curriculum areas.
4. Responsive Classroom and its impact on student achievement and reduction in discipline issues.
5. the Positivity Project and its use to build positive school culture.

Goals:

- I. Teachers will have the skills necessary to interpret student assessment data through NWEA and IXL Diagnostics and use it to differentiate learning effectively.
- II. Our teachers will promote the integration of technology by utilizing elements of Google Classroom, Power School, IXL, SeeSaw, Khan Academy and other technology resources in their classrooms.
- III. Title classes will utilize iPads to access applications that enhance phonics instruction and promote better learner outcomes.
- IV. Staff will address exceptional learners through classroom and support programming aimed at providing appropriate extension or accommodation.
- V. Teachers will integrate Responsive Classroom and the Positivity Project techniques to promote positive classroom culture.

Procedure:

1. Teachers will be instructed and coached in the use of NWEA MAP for using data to inform instruction.

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2. Teachers will be trained in using our technology integration and classroom instructional strategies as a means of differentiating and updating instruction.
3. Teachers will be trained in Responsive Classroom and the Positivity Project to learn techniques and integrate what they learn into their classrooms.

Data driven:

1. We are working to reduce the number of students who need reading support by focusing on sound phonics instruction in the classroom. Numbers visiting our resource teachers should drop below 25% by grade three.
2. Since beginning NWEA testing, we have seen the composite scores of students show a large spread in ability levels. This grade level make-up shows the need for more differentiation to reach 80% of students making their growth goals.
3. Responsive Classroom and the Positivity Project will be used as a means to boost academic success through relationship building and social emotional learning. These initiatives create greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate. This will be measured through discipline referral tracking and percentage of students reaching their NWEA growth goal.

What have you learned from this year's professional development activities that you will use to support further training in the future.

OR

What have you learned from this year's unprecedented closure of schools that you will use to support professional development in the future.

Although time was cut short due to the school closure associated with Covid-19, we learned that our strategic direction is the correct one. More cohesive reading instruction is a part of the initiative that will play out over the next few years as we pursue Believe and Read for our youngest learners and Benchmarks for our intermediate classes. We piloted Benchmarks in fourth grade and saw good results with our winter NWEA testing.

Through the emergency distance learning that we were forced into, we learned that all our efforts on technology intergration were time well spent. A large part of our success in this area is due to my teachers' comfort level with delivery of content via technology. We will focus next year's learning on Google Classroom and SeeSaw platforms along with some exploration of video lesson options to better prepare for additional school shutdowns.

We plan to continue with Responsive classroom and the Positivity Project training next year as well. This is especially relevant in light of the current challenges with inclusion and perceptions. We will also continue to provide more coaching on NWEA data analysis and opportunities to differentiate in the classroom to meet the needs of learners.

By checking this box, you are verifying that your school has a written professional development plan that supports on-going training in areas such as curriculum, instruction and assessment strategies. This may be included in your School Strategic Plan.

If you are willing to share a sample exemplar, please attach.

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