

# School Change Process

*Archdiocese of Cincinnati*

This process is meant to guide schools and parishes that wish to make significant changes in the programs offered by a Catholic school. By design, this process represents a partnership approach that involves input and decision making on both the local and Archdiocesan levels. If followed with fidelity, this process is intended to ensure that Catholic schools are best positioned to meet the needs of the people we serve.

“School Changes” include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Openings of new schools
- b. Closures
- c. Consolidations
- d. The new affiliation of a parish with a school (i.e. an inter-parish relationship)
- e. The alienation of a parish sponsorship (including consolidated and inter-parish relationships)
- f. The addition of new grades (including preschool programs)
- g. A change in a school name
- h. A change in the physical address of a school

**Please note that, for school closures and consolidations, the Superintendent must be made aware of the Initiation of the Change Process (i.e. step #2) by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to the closure or consolidation.** This process assumes that school closures and consolidations will be a last resort after all other inventions have been considered.

## School Change Process:

1. **Review of Data:** Local and/or Archdiocesan leaders conduct an internal study and analysis of existing performance data.
2. **Initiation of Change Process:** Local leadership (pastor, principal, board, etc.) will contact the Superintendent of Catholic Schools in writing, detailing the perceived need for the change and briefly citing evidence to support the change. If initiated at the Archdiocesan level, local school leadership (pastor, principal, board, etc.) will be contacted in writing by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
  - a. **Communications Plan:** The Superintendent will work with the local leadership to construct a Communications Plan to be used with local stakeholders. This plan, which will vary depending upon the circumstances, will include provisions of how and when to inform stakeholders that the school may be changed.
3. **Formation of Strategy Team:** The Superintendent of Catholic Schools will form a “Strategy Team” comprised of the assigned Regional Director, at least one member of the Office of School Strategic Planning, and other individuals (as deemed appropriate to the circumstances). The purpose of the Strategy Team is to meet with the local leadership,

review the materials, and gather additional data or input as needed. In some cases, the Strategy Team may visit the school site to review files and/or meet with school stakeholders.

4. **Stakeholder Input:** School stakeholders are given opportunity to give their input or voice concerns regarding any proposed changes. The specific method of soliciting stakeholder input will be determined by the Strategy Team and local leadership.
  - a. **Council or Board Consultation (designated schools only):** For parish-affiliated schools, consultation will take place with the Parish Council(s). For schools with Boards of Limited Jurisdiction or Boards of Trustees, consultation must take place with the Board.
  - b. **Pastor Consultation:** For Parish, Consolidated, and Inter-Parish Schools, a Consultation will take place with the pastor(s) of the parish(es) that sponsors the school.
5. **Strategy Team Recommendation:** After careful deliberation and analysis together with local leadership, the Strategy Team will present a recommendation to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools regarding the proposed change.
6. **Consultation with ACSC:** The Superintendent will present the findings to the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Council (ACSC) for input.
7. **Recommendation of Superintendent:** The Superintendent will present a recommendation to the Archbishop of Cincinnati for a final decision.
8. **Archbishop Decision:** The Archbishop will make the final determination on the change.
9. **Implementation:** The change will be enacted and the appropriate governmental and/or accrediting organizations will be contacted. Continual monitoring will take place. (NOTE: The implementation of most changes will require additional, specific steps required by the governmental/and or accrediting organization. In cases of changes in Governance, the Office of School Strategic Planning will utilize the Archdiocesan Governance Transition Team to help realize the transition.)