

## **SAIS-SACS Accreditation Report 2008-2009**

Prior to Mrs. Anita Nagel's arrival in 2006, the OLA Catholic School community had completed the necessary SAIS-SACS re-accreditation. An action plan was created for SAIS and SACS. OLACS continues to work on that plan to improve facilities, finances, faith, education, and the learning environment in general. The goals and OLACS's status of meeting each standard is outlined below.

### **STANDARD 1 — Continuous Process of Educational Improvement**

**Goal 1: To increase enrollment to capacity while maintaining our Catholic identity and academic excellence through creation of a strategic plan.**

**Action Plan:** The Archdiocese of Atlanta is in the process of completing an Archdiocesan strategic plan. Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School has also begun a strategic planning process. Parents, students, and teachers completed an on-line survey in the spring of 2008 and 2009, and these surveys will continue annually. At present, the school administration is in the process of taking in all the positive suggestions and determining which suggestions are workable within the school framework.

The strategic plan, the survey responses from teachers, parents and students, and the accreditation evaluation of the standards will assist us in focusing on our strengths, limitations, opportunities, and threats. These will also provide data for goals over the next five years.

### **STANDARD 2 — Beliefs and Missions**

**Goal 1: To create a more comprehensive faculty handbook.**

**Action Plan:** The OLACS faculty handbook has been revised each year, beginning in 2006-07. The handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis and revised as needed to incorporate changes from the Archdiocese as well as any updates to OLACS policies and procedures.

**Goal 2: To review and revise the OLA Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook annually.**

**Action Plan:** The *OLA Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook* is reviewed and revised annually by the entire faculty.

**Goal 3: To create an awareness of the school mission and belief statements.**

**Action Plan:** The OLACS mission statement is on the website, newsletters, emails and other written communications. It is also prominently displayed throughout the OLA Catholic School facilities.

### **STANDARD 3 — Governance and Leadership**

**Goal 1: To utilize the OLA Catholic School Advisory Council.**

**Action Plan:** As per the direction of Diane Starkovich, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the name "OLA Catholic School Advisory Board" has been changed to the "OLA Catholic School Advisory Council." Meetings are held quarterly. New sub-committees of Finance and Development, Marketing and Public Relations, Advocacy, Facilities, Strategic Planning, and Catholic Identity were created in 2007-08. All subcommittees serve to advise the principal. The Archdiocese of Atlanta, Office of Catholic Schools, provides workshops to train the Advisory Council annually.

### **STANDARD 4 — Finance and Resources**

**Goal 1: OLA will build the annual fund contributions from the current \$120,000 to \$170,000.**

**Action Plan:** It was determined by the Home and School Board in 2006-07 that the number of fundraisers be limited. Parent participation in the OLACS Annual Fund increased to eighty-five percent, and \$270,000 was raised in the 2006-07 school year. In 2007-2008, a Gala was held in addition to the Annual Fund drive. These combined efforts raised \$400,000 to meet the electrical rewiring needs of OLA Catholic School. The Gala is now a bi-annual fundraising event. During the 2008-2009 academic year, the Annual Fund/development and fundraising activities raised over \$200,000. This money was used for capital improvements to the school roof and to offset tuition by approximately \$1,170.00 per student.

**Goal 2: OLA will increase grant submissions and receipts of funds.**

**Action Plan:** OLA has submitted requests for grants but remains somewhat hindered in this area because prior permission must be received from the Archdiocese prior to submitting any grant request.

OLACS received three grants in the 2008-2009 school year.

One grant was awarded for an AED (defibrillator) which is located near the clinic. This makes two AED's available should an emergency situation arise.

One grant was received to purchase assessment materials the school psychologist. This grant was awarded by IBM.

A third grant was received from the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia. (See below.)

**Goal 3: OLA Catholic School will renew its relationship with the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia to promote the support of OLA Catholic School. The Development Director will furnish the foundation with the school's current Annual Report and newsletters and will confirm that OLA Catholic School remains on the foundation's mailing list.**

**Action Plan:** The OLA Catholic School Development Director submits the school's Annual Report to the North Georgia Foundation. New guidelines from the Archdiocese require that the school receive permission to contact the North Georgia Foundation.

In 2008-2009 the Catholic Foundation of North Georgia granted \$15,000 toward the roofing project. OLACS appreciates the support provided by this organization.

**STANDARD 5 — Human Resources**

**Goal 1: OLA Catholic School will enhance professional development.**

**Action Plan:** OLACS has an endowment for teachers' professional development and education. Teachers attend nationally-recognized professional development courses pertinent to their specific grade levels or subject areas. Professional development opportunities are offered by the National Catholic Education Association, DeKalb County Schools, Georgia Educational Training Agency, and other recognized presenters.

**Goal 2: OLA Catholic School will expand the faculty mentoring program.**

**Action Plan:** OLACS expanded the mentoring program in 2008-2009. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor teacher. Teachers and mentors meet regularly for support and guidance. New teachers observe other teachers in the classroom both at OLACS and at other educational facilities to assist in peer development opportunities. The school administration is responsible for overseeing the mentoring program.

**Goal 3: OLA Catholic School will increase participation in professional development courses, seminars and workshops.**

**Action Plan:** OLACS has an endowment for teachers' professional development and education. Teachers attend nationally-recognized professional development courses pertinent to their specific grade levels or subject areas. Professional development opportunities are offered by the National Catholic Education Association, DeKalb County Schools, Georgia Educational Training Agency, National Middle School Association, National Catholic Education Association, Georgia Independent School Association, and other recognized presenters.

An endowment exists to assist teachers in obtaining advanced degrees. Written procedures are in place to ensure awareness of this benefit, and it is communicated through the faculty handbook.

**STANDARD 6 — Support Services for Student Learning**

**Goal 1: To enhance privacy of counseling locations.**

**Action Plan:** It is necessary for the school counselor's office be in the general vicinity of the students. The placement of this office allows for the mutual accessibility of counselor to students and students to counselor. Blinds are placed in the office to offer privacy.

**Goal 2: OLA Catholic School should post required school clinic procedures that are contained in Georgia School Health and Resource Manual, the Office of Catholic Schools of North Georgia Policies and Procedures Manual, Injury Management Plan.**

**Action Plan:** Required clinic procedures are posted. OLACS nurses attend required Archdiocesan meetings, which began in August 2007. Clinic personnel are licensed nurses, and copies of their licenses are in their personnel files.

**Goal 3: OLA will publish its policies prohibiting door-to-door solicitation by its students for fund raising activities.**

**Action Plan:** The policy prohibiting door-to-door solicitation for school-sponsored organizations is published in the *OLA Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook*.

## **STANDARD 7 — Library/Media Services**

**Goal 1: The Media Center book shelves will be expanded to accommodate future growth of library collection.**

**Action Plan:** OLA Catholic School added additional shelving in 2006-07.

## **STANDARD 8 — Facilities**

**Goal 1: OLA School's main entrance will be clearly designated and improved.**

**Action Plan:** The services of an architect were retained in 2006-2007 to develop plans for an improved school entrance. However, other necessary capital improvements continue to take precedence.

In the summer of 2007, the school office was re-located to the *de facto* main entrance. OLACS also added a doorbell/code entry system and security cameras to ensure building security and safety for the school community.

**Goal 2: A protective covering will be constructed to provide shelter for the students during carpool times.**

**Action Plan:** It was determined in 2007 that there was an issue with the 50-year-old electrical system in the school building. Rewiring the building became a priority and was completed in the summer of 2008. Consequently, the shelter project was put on hold. In addition, administrators were informed that the OLACS roof was in need of immediate repair. Therefore, the 2008-2009 capital improvement funds were designated for the roofing project.

The Advisory Council continues to review a list of proposed facilities improvements. Items on the list include a carpool shelter, resurfacing the the playground, and the possibility of moving the clinic near the cafeteria and the playground.

**Goal 3: OLA Catholic School will install a keycard/ID entrance system to enhance security.**

**Action Plan:** The installation of a keycard entrance system has been delayed due the costs of the electrical project and the roofing needs.

**Goal 4: Hot water will be made available throughout the school.**

**Action Plan:** Hot water was added to the school during the electrical project of 2008.

**Goal 5: OLA Catholic School will retain the services of a full time Plant Manager.**

**Action Plan:** A facilities manager is in place to serve the school and church. A second full-time custodian was added to the OLACS staff in 2006-2007. Due to the economy and budgeting issues, the second custodian was reduced to part-time for the 2009-2010 school year.

**Goal 6: OLA Catholic School will improve the quality of the playing surface available to students.**

**Action Plan:** OLA Catholic School upgraded the playground in 2006-2007 by adding additional fencing to meet the demands by the state of Georgia for the Pre-K licensing program. OLACS provided artificial turf for the playground area in 2005-2006 to improve the recreation area and to create a healthy environment for our students.

Consideration is being given to improving the section of the playground not covered by artificial turf. Bids are being obtained to determine if it would be cost effective to consider options other than mulch for the playground area.

**Goal 7: OLA Catholic School will enhance safety and security systems.**

**Action Plan:** In 2007, the school office was relocated to the *de facto* main entrance and OLACS added a doorbell/code entry system and security cameras to ensure building security and safety for the school community. Motion detectors and cameras have been placed throughout the buildings to ensure the security of the building. Additional motion detectors were placed strategically throughout the building in 2008.

**STANDARD 9 — Communication and Community Relationships**

**Goal 1: OLA Catholic School will create avenues providing for more extensive communication between the home and school.**

**Action Plan:** Teachers and the administration send home weekly communications. In addition, OLA Catholic School utilizes Edline to ensure parents have the access to their student's grades as needed. OLA Catholic School is also in the process of redesigning the school webpage. Teachers' email addresses are published in the *OLA Catholic School Parent/Student Directory*. An email blast and electronic newsletters were added as communication tools in 2007-08. In 2008, the services of automated calling system were retained should an emergency situation require immediate notification to the parents.

**Goal 2: OLA Catholic School will increase promotion of the school's image.**

**Action Plan:** The action plan stated that funding would be made available for advertising in local publications. Funding is available; additionally, articles are often submitted to the *Georgia Bulletin* and other local publications.

In 2007-2008, a Marketing and Public Relations subcommittee was added to the school Advisory Council.

In 2008-2009, OLACS created a marketing brochure which introduced the school to the broader community.

**STANDARD 10 — Curriculum and Instruction Design**

**Goal 1: OLA Catholic School will place increased emphasis on vertical teaming.**

**Action Plan:** During the 2006-07 year, in an effort to align the curriculum, teachers began meeting at grade levels. Newly-designed grade level meetings were held throughout 2007-08 and continued during the 2008-2009 school year.

OLACS teachers will map the school's curriculum to ensure continuity of the learning process from grade to grade. The Archdiocese began writing new curriculum in 2007-2008. After writing, each subject area's curriculum is piloted for one year before being implemented the next. Grade-level meetings provide an opportunity for teachers to understand how the new curriculum affects their students' education. OLACS teachers will continue to map the curriculum as new components are made available from the Archdiocese.

**Goal 2: OLA Catholic School will expand the music program.**

**Action Plan:** All students have music as part of their curriculum. The annual school musical was brought back as an extracurricular activity 2006-2007. OLACS hired a second music teacher in 2007. In 2008-2009, the Archdiocese decreased the number of curriculum minutes devoted to music. Consequently, OLACS now employs one music teacher. Students continue to have a choice of band or choir beginning in fourth grade.

**Goal 3: OLA Catholic School will enhance the Archdiocese of Atlanta Curriculum.**

**Action Plan:** Since 2007, the Archdiocese has engaged in writing new curriculum. To date, math, science, social studies, religion, technology, and language arts have been rewritten. OLACS added a full-time Curriculum Director in 2006-2007. The responsibility of the Curriculum Director is to introduce the Archdiocesan curriculum, to aid the teachers in aligning the curriculum, and to identify gaps between grade levels.

We express our appreciation to the following teachers who participated in the process: Mrs. Brown (math), Mrs. Cordell (technology), Mrs. Kelley (language arts), and Miss Shoemaker (religion).

**Goal 4: OLA Catholic School will determine if a pre-first program is feasible for the school. This determination will be based upon a thorough student of available space, need, and financial impact.**

**Action Plan:** It has been determined that the number of OLA Catholic School students who would benefit from a pre-first program is so minimal that, at this time, it would not be a fiscally responsible decision.

**Goal 5: OLA Catholic School will develop a technology curriculum.**

**Action Plan:** OLA Catholic School assisted the Archdiocese in rewriting the new technology curriculum. OLACS expresses its gratitude to Mrs. Lisa Cordell for participating in this process.

### **STANDARD 11 — Citizenship and Conduct**

**Goal 1: OLA Catholic School will enhance good stewardship, respect, and ownership.**

**Action Plan:** OLA Catholic School utilizes an altar server program, lector program, student ambassador program, Peace Patrol program, and Class Acts theme of the month to encourage good citizenship. OLACS complies with Archdiocesan guidelines to evaluate the in-place faith-based religion program.

### **STANDARD 12 — Assessment, Measurement, and Effective Results**

**Goal 1: OLA Catholic School will investigate curriculum-based testing.**

**Action Plan:** Assessing content occurs daily in the school. In addition, OLACS added middle and end-of-the-year exams for grades 6 through 8.

OLACS employs a school psychologist/educational specialist who is able to complete psycho-educational testing for students in need of remediation and to incorporate recommendations into the curriculum.

In addition, OLACS has instituted pre and post testing for the primary grades to determine the growth in students through the summer and to identify at what level instruction should be initiated as students return to school.

**Goal 2: OLA Catholic School will improve the usage of building-level assessments as a tool in curricular decision-making.**

**Action Plan:** OLACS has hired a school psychologist who is able to do psychological testing to ensure the students' needs are identified and remediated. Additional testing materials have been purchased to evaluate the students' learning profiles. During the 2008-2009 school year, OLACS received a grant to assist with the purchase of additional assessment tools. These assessments are standardized and normed and will be used for admissions, as well as for evaluating learning profiles. Finally, additional support persons with Special Education degrees are in place to meet the individual needs of our students.

**A Goal, not stated on the Accreditation documents, was to add a foreign language. (met)**

**Action Plan:** Two foreign language teachers have been employed to teach Spanish — a part-time teacher for grades Pre-K through 4 and a full time teacher for grades 5 through 8.