



Archdiocese of Los Angeles- Department of Catholic Schools

Catholic Identity Standards, Benchmarks, & Indicators

The Catholic Identity Standards, Benchmark, and Indicators outlined below are provided as a guide for schools to measure themselves against the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools (NSBECS). These will be used in conjunction with preparation for a school's accreditation visit. Guidance will be provided from the Department of Catholic Schools during a school's accreditation writing year.

The indicators for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are defined as follow:

- **ADLA Basic Indicators-** the minimum standard by which all Catholic schools in the ADLA should be able to display evidence of progress in that particular area.
- **ADLA Ideal Indicators-** the ideal standard, is that which exceeds the basic indicator, which Catholic schools can strive towards for greater effectiveness in living out it's Catholic mission and Identity. These are not limited to what is indicated on this form as a school may have other localized indicators that go above and beyond the basic indicators.

The indicators are meant to represent who the school is called to be as the family of a loving God. The goal is that these will serve as a barometer for both individuals in the school community and the school as a whole community of faith ensuring that all are working toward the same goal (Romans 15:6). Finally, they can be used as a measuring stick, giving the Holy Spirit the freedom to show a school community where it may still need to be perfected (Matthew 5:48).

NSBECS Standard	NSBECS Benchmark	ADLA Basic Indicators	ADLA Ideal Indicators
<p>NSBECS Catholic Identity Standard 1</p> <p>An excellent Catholic school is driven and guided by a clearly communicated mission that embraces a Catholic identity that includes gospel values, a focus on the Eucharist, and a commitment to communal faith formation, academic excellence, missionary discipleship, and service.</p>	<p>1.1 The governing body and the leader/leadership team ensure that the mission statement identifies the school as Catholic and references the school's unique religious character or charism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vision/Mission/Philosophy flows from Jesus' Missionary Mandate and reflects Christo-centric and Catholic terminology • The Vision/Mission/Philosophy of archdiocesan and parish schools are reviewed and approved by the Department of Catholic Schools. • The Vision/Mission/Philosophy of private schools are in alignment with the policies of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. 	
	<p>1.2 The governing body and the leader/leadership team use the mission statement as the foundation and normative reference for all planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governing body & leadership ensures policies, programs, and strategic planning, are guided by the Church's mission for Catholic education • The faculty and staff members, student activities, assemblies, and guest speakers are aligned with the Vision/ Mission/ Philosophy and magisterial teachings of the Catholic Church • The school upholds Catholic moral norms in the approval of student and faculty organizations, clubs, associations, or activities with fidelity to the ADLA Administrative handbook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each member of the governing body/leadership is informed of and committed to the responsibility to respect, promote, strengthen, and defend the Catholic identity of the school
	<p>1.3 The school leader/leadership team regularly calls together the school's various school constituents (including but not limited</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vision/Mission/Philosophy reflects the charism of the school's namesake and/or sponsoring religious community. 	

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	to faculty and staff, parents, students, and alumni(ae) to review, clarify, and renew commitment to the school's mission statement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vision/Mission/Philosophy is reviewed and revised annually involving all school constituents Mission statement ensures fidelity to the divine mission of Catholic education and the school 	
	1.4 The mission statement is visible in public places and contained in official documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vision/Mission/Philosophy is included in the school's faculty/parent/student/athletic handbooks, appropriate digital spaces, etc... The Vision/Mission/Philosophy are displayed in faculty lounge, classrooms, staff support offices, etc. 	
	1.5 All school constituents know and understand the school's mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vision/Mission/Philosophy is referenced at school assemblies, public gatherings, open houses, commencements, etc. All faculty can articulate mission/mission/philosophy 	
	1.6 Supplemental statements such as the school's motto, beliefs, philosophy, core values, charism, and/or graduate profile are aligned with the school's mission statement and are inspired by the school's Catholic identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student graduate exit questionnaire(s)/interviews reflects an understanding of the schools mission, vision, philosophy The school expresses institutional commitment to the Church's teaching on the divine mission of Catholic education as evidenced by its lived school culture, policy handbooks, curricular, co-curricular and operational programming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school actively encourages graduating students to continue their Catholic education

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<p><u>NSBECS Catholic Identity Standard 2</u></p> <p>An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides an exemplary academic program for religious education and catechesis in the Catholic faith, set within a total academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture, and life.</p>	<p>2.1 Religious education curriculum and instruction facilitates an encounter with Jesus Christ that evangelizes and meets the religious education requirements and standards of the (arch)diocese.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The religion curriculum is aligned with the ADLA standards (K thru 8 or USCCB 9 thru 12 religion curriculum framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students utilize and understand how to use the Scriptures and Catechism of the Catholic Church for their study of the religion curriculum Impactful supplemental programs and resources for students are part of the school's approach to evangelizing catechesis (i.e. Studio 3:16, Christine In Action, etc...)
	<p>2.2 Religion classes are an integral part of the academic program in the assignment of teachers, amount of class time, and the selection of texts and other curricular materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students are enrolled in a religion/theology course each semester/trimester of attendance in accordance with archdiocesan policy. The religion textbooks are included on the USCCB Conformity list Regardless of school governance, any modifications to religious curriculum standards, scope & sequence have been reviewed and approved by the DCS. Catholic apologetics curriculum offered in the 12th grade for students enrolled in a Catholic High school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catholic apologetics curriculum incorporated across all applicable grade levels. (ex. grades 6-12)
	<p>2.3 Faculty who teach religion meet (arch)diocesan requirements for academic and catechetical preparation and certification to provide effective religion curriculum and instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All religion teachers are practicing Catholics All TK-8 teachers are actively working toward catechetical certification/recertification from the DCS All High School religion teachers are actively working toward catechetical certification/recertification from the DCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Catholic teachers have a letter of reference in their personnel file from their home parish pastor or another priest confirming regular mass attendance & parish participation All teachers are pursuing or have received catechetical certification from the DCS and is actively maintained. All HS religion teachers have a master's degree or licentiate in theology, philosophy or a related theological field

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLA Ministry Profile submitted and updated to reflect current staffing 	(e.g. sacramental theology, scripture, systematic theology, moral theology, etc.) from a Catholic college or university.
	2.4 The school's Catholic identity requires excellence in academic and intellectual formation in all subjects including religious education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARK Test is completed and analyzed annually per grade level for all students and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An action plan is developed to work on areas for growth as a result ARK data and analysis.
	2.5 Faculty use the lenses of scripture and the Catholic intellectual tradition in all subjects to help students think critically and ethically about the world around them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catholic Curriculum standards are incorporated across all academic disciplines Catholic values are instilled across the curriculum Summer reading list includes religion class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer reading list includes one spiritual classic/year for HS
	2.6 Catholic culture and faith are expressed in the school through multiple and diverse forms of visual and performing arts, music, and architecture, as well as all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crucifix and image of Blessed Virgin Mary in all classrooms, offices, library, cafeteria and public gathering spaces Catholic faith integrated into academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs Chapel/Church/Permanent worship spaces not used as meeting place Portraits of magisterial shepherds on display in main school office Pope, Archbishop, regional bishop) All coaches have received "Play Like a Champion" certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School facilities includes an outdoor BVM grotto or shrine Other shrines, statuary are visible on campus Buildings and/or gathering spaces are named for relative saints, religious patrons, etc...

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	<p>2.7 The theory and practice of the Church's social teachings are essential elements of the curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADLA Ministry Profile has been submitted and updated to reflect current ministerial programs Curriculum includes formation on human dignity, life, justice and peace elements Respect Life Week Curriculum is integrated annually Theology of the Body Curriculum is incorporated in 6-12th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theology of the Body curriculum incorporated across all applicable grade levels.
<p><u>NSBECS Catholic Identity Standard 3</u> An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities both within and outside the classroom for Christ-centered student faith formation, participation in liturgical and communal prayer, and action in service of missionary discipleship and social justice.</p>	<p>3.1 Every student is offered timely and regular opportunities to grow closer to Christ through prayer, the Eucharist, and liturgy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School calendars student body and/or class Masses (weekly for ES/Monthly for HS) including all Holy Days of Obligation (Nov. 1, Dec. 8) and Ash Wednesday - deacon if priest not available School appropriately forms students in the meaning, value, and proper participation in the Mass and reverent reception of the sacraments Marian Themed liturgy is offered during May Regional bishop/other bishop invited to celebrate School Mass annually Penance Service with Confessions offered during Advent and Lent Liturgical Seasons are visibly incorporated on campus, in classroom and explained in religion classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual May Crowning Liturgy offered Opportunities for sacramental confession offered regularly Opportunities for prayer, liturgy, and the Sacraments are prioritized on the school calendar and daily schedule Students are exposed to and can articulate informal and/or spontaneous prayer practices Sacred images, icons, artwork, furnishings, and spaces are present and facilitate opportunities for living encounters with God

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liturgical norms and guidelines are observed. Eucharistic reverence is taught, and modeled. 	
	<p>3.2 Every student is offered timely, regular, and age-appropriate opportunities to reflect on their life experiences and faith through retreats and/or other spiritual experiences that prioritize both personal reflection and interpersonal encounter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All classes, athletic events, practices, meetings, etc. begin and end with prayer Annual spiritual retreats days are offered to for students in sacramental prep and grade 6-12 Catholic High Schools have a dedicated Campus Ministry director School-wide Stations of the Cross calendared at least once during Lent Exposition of Blessed Sacrament offered each semester Campus Blessed Sacrament chapel (or parish church) open daily to the school community (as deemed necessary) Visits to the Blessed Sacrament are encouraged Rosary prayer opportunities offered in October and May Feast days reflecting the multicultural diversity of the students, parish/religious community, and/or archdiocese are recognized and/or celebrated (<i>e.g., Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Juan Diego, St. Lorenzo Ruiz, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, Chinese Martyrs, Black Catholic History Month, Korean Martyrs, Vietnamese Martyrs, etc.</i>) School acknowledges and encourages virtuous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Participation in Diocesan sponsored Youth retreats, conferences & workshops (i.e. City of Saints, Youth Day, NCYC, Holy Fire, etc...) School has a dedicated campus ministry team of adults serving pastoral needs of youth There is evidence of participation in school community devotions (novenas and use of sacramentals) More frequent "Way of the Cross" is offered Monthly school wide Eucharistic Adoration offered Rosary prayed more frequently School Wide novena to patron saint or other namesake School participation in Parish and/or Diocesan activities and events as related to multi-cultural diversity Virtue formation program is incorporated across all grade levels and athletic teams Overnight retreat opportunities offered for grades 11-12 Kairos is offered in the 12th grade One spiritual/religious retreat per semester is offered for each grade level.

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		behavior throughout the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school community participates in an annual spiritual pilgrimage with the greater church
	3.3 Every student participates in authentic Christian service programs to promote the lived reality of action in service of social justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School incorporates a Christian service program with reflection component required in 6th thru 12th grade School wide programming that reflects the themes of Catholic Social Teaching is incorporated frequently School instills in students a respect for the dignity and sanctity of human life Respect Life Week Observed annually- High Schools incorporate Respect life Curriculum School ensures that there are opportunities to promote vocations and vocational discernment to religious life School instills in students a Christian view of family life and the vocation of marriage as an expression of Trinitarian love 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christian Service impact component included in 8th grade/Senior Exit Interview upon high school graduation School community participates in local parish and/or Diocesan wide service drives and events School offers an Annual School-Wide assemblies/Speakers focused on 7 themes of Catholic Social Teaching School offers an Annual School-Wide assemblies/Speakers focused on Mission Awareness School offers an Annual School-Wide assemblies/Speakers focused on Pro-Life issues School participates in ONE Life LA & Requiem Mass for the Unborn School hosts an annual vocations fair High School hosts an active vocation club with weekly meetings School observes National Marriage Week every February
	3.4 Every student experiences role models of faith and service for social justice among the administrators, faculty, and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School participation in Environmental Sustainability School instills in students the Christian obligation to live lives of love and service, seek justice, and minister to the poor, marginalized, and outcast School instills in students the desire to serve the common good, promote human rights and dignity, religious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Participation in CRS Operation Rice Bowl or other similar programs Environmental Sustainability Curriculum incorporated for all grades Mission awareness program/committee consists of students, teachers and administrators Pro-Life student involvement/committee consists of students, teachers and administrators

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		<div>freedom, and seeks to respond to the needs of local and global communities</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">School's disciplinary policies reflect a commitment to teach virtue	

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NSBECS Catholic Identity Standard 4 An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities for Christ-centered adult faith formation and action in service of missionary discipleship and social justice.	4.1 The leader/leadership team provides engaging spiritual formation experiences that prioritize both personal reflection and interpersonal encounter for the faculty and staff on a regular and timely basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant prayer/meditation at beginning of all faculty meetings Annual faculty day of spiritual/religious retreat The school ensures that employees receive ongoing professional development and formation in moral and religious principles, the social teachings of the Catholic Church, and critical issues in society today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overnight faculty retreat or one day per semester
	4.2 The leader/leadership team and faculty assist parents/guardians in their role as the primary educators of their children in faith, making clear to families the appropriate supportive role of the school as it relates to parish and home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant prayer/meditation at beginning of all parent meetings Parent Formation for Sacramental Preparation If Catholic tuition rate exists Baptismal certificate required Religious component to student/family admissions interviews Annual Parent Retreat Offering School ensures consistency and harmony between the home and school, meaningful involvement of parents, and responsiveness to the needs of parents in the integral formation of students School partners with and respects the role of parents as primary educators when introducing topics of a sensitive nature into the curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter or form on file from Pastor affirming family's regular participation in parish life. Parent education/retreat program is a regular component of the school's service to parent faith formation Annual Parent Retreat requirement The school assist Catholic and non-Catholic parents to integrate into the Catholic community and, if appropriate, formally transition into the Catholic Church A faith formation platform is offered and utilized by families through the parish/school- i.e. FORMED.org, Franciscan Catechetical Institute, etc...
	4.3 The leader/leadership team collaborates with other institutions (for example, Catholic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of diocesan initiatives for parent faith formation opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A faith formation platform is offered and utilized through the parish/school- i.e. FORMED.org, Franciscan Catechetical Institute, etc...

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	Charities, Catholic higher education, religious sponsor programs) to provide opportunities for parents/guardians to grow in the knowledge and practice of the faith.		
	4.4 All adults in the school community are invited to participate in authentic Christian service programs to promote the lived reality of action in service of social justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School ensures opportunities for Parent/student/Teachers to participate in school/class wide service projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School observes national movements for various social causes.. i.e. Red Ribbon Week, Mental Health Awareness Month, etc...
	4.5 Every administrator, faculty, and staff member visibly supports the faith life of the school community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff intentionally participate in the liturgical/sacramental life of the school All staff are equipped and trained to lead the school community in prayer (classrooms, school events, assemblies, etc..) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained and serve as liturgical ministers at school liturgical functions
	4.6 The leader/leadership team attends to the unique formative needs of faculty and staff so that all faculty and staff are equipped to support an authentic and vibrant Catholic school faith community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school ensures that employees and volunteers have the necessary knowledge, skills, dispositions, and ongoing training to provide opportunities for living encounters with Christ The faculty religious formation program aligns with ADLA policy The school offers an annual faculty day of retreat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School offers an overnight staff retreat or one day per semester

Catholic Identity Outliers in Leadership and Governance Domain

- Majority faculty are practicing Catholics
- HS Campus Minister/ES Religion Coordinator- practicing Catholic, BA, representative voice in the school administration
- Faculty hiring process: Vision/mission/philosophy guides candidate selection
- Practicing Catholic faculty expectations articulated
- New personnel orientation includes instruction on vision/mission/philosophy

Catholic Identity Outliers in Operational Vitality Domain

- School protects Catholic moral norms in the selection of outside service providers and organizations

Catholic Identity Outliers in Academic Excellence Domain

- School provides for learning opportunities that develop creativity, reflection, critical thinking, and moral decision-making
- School ensures a commitment to the integration of Catholic intellectual traditions throughout the academic program
- School provides for interdisciplinary instruction to expose underlying relationships between subject matters
- School promotes dialogue between faith and reason
- School ensures that academic disciplines and instruction instill in students ethical and religious principles faithful to Catholic teaching
- School emphasizes Catholic contributions to theology, philosophy, ethics, literature, science, mathematics, and the visual and performing arts

Defining Characteristics: https://ncea.org/NSBECS/NSBECS/Standards/Defining_Characteristics_of_Catholic_Schools.aspx?hkey=36193389-1a3c-4736-b212-332906083fd1