

Organization for Student Learning

School Philosophy and Mission

The school has established a clear statement of philosophy and mission that reflects a commitment to Catholic identity, thoroughness of instruction, a focus on the needs of the whole person, parents as primary educators, teachers as facilitators of learning, and recognition of the dignity of all members of the school community.

Holy Angels School has developed a Catholic philosophy, which is clearly lived out in the life of the school. The school reviews the philosophy and mission statements annually as part of the staff and HAPAC parents retreat. The philosophy and mission statement are then presented at the Parents Orientation Night. Throughout the years, changes have been made to adjust to the needs of our school community. The revised philosophy and mission statements are more concise and easier to understand by all stakeholders. These statements take into account the interest and concerns of the parents, students, faculty and staff, administration and parish staff, who are our stakeholders. Its Catholic focus is seen in the nature of interaction between students and staff. The philosophy and mission statements of the school are also seen in the bulletin board displays and in the frequency of school and church services for all students. The Catholic educational tradition of addressing the needs of the whole child is seen in the variety of programs available to the children, from the various enrichment programs held during the school day, sports program, Extended Care program, Safe and Caring School program and K-8 Family gatherings that promote unity, as well as cultural understanding and acceptance.

A major focus of the philosophy of the school is the holistic development of each child. Teachers help students to develop intellectually by providing them challenging and meaningful activities. Title 1 teacher provides assistance to small groups of students who are formally identified and academically “at risk.” Teacher aides are provided for kindergarten to third grade and algebra teachers for seventh and eighth grades. Spiritual growth is the primary focus of the school, with classroom prayer and school-

*Faculty and
HAPAC Parents
Retreat*

*Parents’
Orientation
Night*

*Classroom and
hallway bulletin
boards.*

*Title 1 teacher,
Art Program,
Music Class and
Choir, Band
Class*

*Students Family
Meeting*

*Safe and Caring
School Program
Monthly Mass,
Daily prayer via
TV live
broadcasting,
classroom
Prayer Services,*

*P.E. Teacher,
twice a week*

*On-campus
Counselor*

wide community prayer via closed circuit live broadcasting every morning. The student body attends a school mass once a month and other special Church Holy Days. The concern for physical growth is shown in the sports program and physical education program provided by our PE teachers for K-4th and 5th – 8th. The children’s social and psychological growth is guided at school by their homeroom teachers and supported by a part-time on-campus counselor. The teachers help students to develop skills on how to work with each other through frequent opportunities for cooperative work in the classroom. The school sets standards for schoolyard behavior. Extended Day Care provides a substantial connection between the family and the school and offers a nurturing and enriching environment for students who need after-school care. The school has a theme each month and a word each week in relation to our Safe and Caring School Program to help the students cultivate Christian and social skills needed to develop.

*Extended Day
–Care Monday-
Friday*

*Student/Parent
Handbook*

*School
Newspaper
Safe and Caring
resources*

Retreat themes

HAPAC Minutes

*Back To School
Night Handouts*

The philosophy and mission statement are published in the student/parent handbook, on our school website, in the principal’s message and school newspaper that go out to all parents at the beginning of the year. They are also reiterated by the administrators at the teachers, HAPAC parents and students retreat and at the various school functions and parents meeting, such as Back to School Night, Catholic Schools Week, and HAPAC (Holy Angels Parents Advisory Council) meetings.

*Family Mass
Sacramental
preparation*

Parents’ Retreat

*Parenting
Workshop*

Our philosophy recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children. School policies recognize this belief through frequent communication with parents and their support in the religious and academic development of their children. The religious education program in the school provides opportunities for parental involvement in the sacramental preparation, home-school academic and spiritual activities and attendance in the school and family masses. Our school actively participates in parish liturgies. Parents and teachers serve as lectors, commentators, ushers and Eucharistic ministers and the school children serve as the choir for the 4:30 PM parish mass every Sunday.

*Religion
Curriculum*

*Teacher’s
Lesson Plan*

*Parish Liturgy
Planner*

Holy Childhood

*Disaster Relief
Wheelchair
Drive, Nursing
homes, Katrina
relief, St. Vincent
De Paul, Funds
and cards for*

The school community maintains a strong Catholic identity. Teachers are active Catholics and student population is 97%

Catholic. Teachers emphasize Catholic values in their teaching and encourage students to interact with each other in accordance with these values. Holy Angels School promotes the awareness and practice of the Church's call to service as we pray and help those who are in need. The Student Council and each grade level work on encouraging students and families to reach to the less fortunate as they take the lead in planning activities that help others in need. We continue to look for other opportunities to be of service to the larger community for students at all grade levels.

*Christopher
Rodriguez
(2008), Starlight,
Starbright*

*School Wide
Student Learning
Expectations*

In cooperation with parents, we as a community, strive to educate our students for life and are dedicated to the formation of the whole child in order to meet the challenges of living in Christ through modeling.

Governance

The school administration (pastor and principal) seeks input/participation from the members of the school community, adopts policies which are consistent with the school philosophy and mission, delegates implementation to the professional staff, monitors results, and is committed to sharing the Catholic vision.

The school administration provides an open line of communication among all the members of the school community. For example, the faculty and staff start the day with a morning prayer that gives us the opportunity to share faith with each other as well as communicate input regarding expectations, concerns and suggestions for the school. Faculty and staff members meet with the principal at the beginning of the year to share and discuss their goals and how they are to implement them during the year. The governance of Holy Angels School supports its philosophy and mission statement and fosters the achievement of the school goals. This collaboration leads to recommendations which support the policies of the school and benefit the students we serve. All decisions impacting student learning and school wide policies do align with the school's philosophy and mission statement.

*Philosophy and
Mission Statements*

*Parents/Student
Handbook*

*Student Learning
Expectations*

All staff members must adhere to the Catholic values as stated in the Roman Catholic Church and State of San Francisco Teacher Employment Agreement. Newly hired staff members are required to complete a form on their teaching philosophy prior to the signing of their contracts. All teachers and staff members must demonstrate professionalism and be accountable for their actions.

Interview forms

Holy Angels School is a very family oriented community made up of committed and dedicated administrators, faculty and parents. Everyone strives to share the Catholic values through words and actions. "Holy Angels, a Safe and Caring School" is a theme which all strive to exemplify in their daily lives. Students are taught to respect self, others and all property. All decisions made are based on Catholic values and on the needs of the individual. We are all committed to know, love and serve God.

*Family meeting
agenda*

The school administration is committed to sharing the Catholic vision with all members of the school community. Maintaining the Catholic identity of the school is a priority of the administration by consistently supporting student and faculty participation in worship and various forms of prayer to seeking creative ways to celebrate special feasts or seasons. The principal conducts retreats to faculty and staff, Parents Advisory Council and the students from K-8th grade. The religion curriculum has been updated after the faculty and administration reviewed the different publishers' samples and after hearing their presentations.

*Liturgies
Retreat resources

Religion Text and
Resources*

The administration delegates responsibility to the staff. Staff members have a variety of responsibilities outside of their teaching duties. These range from moderating the Student Council, Walk-Jog-a Thon, Holy Childhood Association, Spelling Bee, Family Meetings and the recycling program. The administration works closely with teachers in these programs, approving projects and being aware of student participation. Through these projects, the philosophy of the school is lived outside of the classroom.

*List of activities
and coordinators*

The school has an advisory council consisting of parents from all grade levels. One responsibility of the HAPAC is to serve as an advisory body to the principal. The council has a monthly scheduled meeting. They choose their chairperson and secretary for this group. The minutes of the meeting are posted on the website for parents' information. They act as liaisons to parents and administration on fund-raising, school activities, marketing strategies and other key issues concerning the school. The administration has an open door policy with the stakeholders on providing feedback and considering suggestions to support policies that benefit the students.

*Holy Angels
Advisory Council
meeting agenda
and minutes
Web Site*

School Leadership

The school leadership encourages the cultivation of Catholic values and the spiritual formation of the school community, focuses the energies of the school on achievement of student learning expectations, empowers the staff, and ensures shared accountability for student learning.

The school leadership encourages the cultivation of Catholic values and the spiritual formation of the school community by giving many options for continuing spiritual growth. Various religious and academic in-services, liturgical or prayer services and retreats for teachers, parents and students are provided. The ongoing retreat program focuses on various themes that change annually based on the year's Catholic Schools Week theme. Last year's retreats focused on "Loving and Accepting Jesus' Light" inspired by the Catholic Schools Week theme, "Catholic Schools Light the Way." This year's retreat is focused on Celebrating Service to internalize the Catholic social teachings to help others in need and celebrate the many service hours that we have shared with the less fortunate. Teachers are encouraged to attend religious growth workshops sponsored by the Archdiocese. The students and parents respond to sacramental preparation such as Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. The school also provides opportunities for parents and students to participate in service projects and various disaster and mission relief programs. The school's religion curriculum focuses on the cultivation of Catholic values and spiritual formation. The principal has implemented the Safe and Caring Schools Program by Katia Petersen, Ph.D. This school-wide program is a social/emotional guide that aims to improve academic success in a nurturing school environment. This program along with the Catholic teaching about human sexuality is integrated in the religion curriculum.

*Retreat in August
for teachers*

*Principal gives a
retreat for each
grade level every
school year*

*Religious
Education
Conference in
Anaheim*

*Teacher's
portfolio,
student's
portfolio, lesson
plans*

The school leadership focuses the energies of the school on the achievement of the student learning expectations. Teacher's portfolio, student's portfolio and lesson plans show high level of actual faculty involvement in actions focusing on successful student learning. Teachers research their own lesson plan and incorporate

technology in their teaching. The school philosophy and the application of student learning expectations are color-coded in the lesson plans of the teachers. The school administration provides continuous workshops and in-services throughout the school year to allow teachers the opportunity to plan, develop and align the student learning expectations to the curriculum and to better meet the needs of the students. There is an ongoing assessment and evaluation of teachers and the curriculum through informal and formal observation by the principal. Curriculum articulation is scheduled to do pulse checks of student learning and assessment of programs. Information is disseminated to parents, students and teachers through the student handbook, school newspaper, school web site and Family Envelope.

*Inspiring Active
Learners was
given to each
teacher as a
resource*

Teachers, principal and staff meet every morning before classes begin and take turns in leading prayer. Teachers are facilitators of learning as they are guided by the administration in the use of current research of education such as cooperative learning, use of portfolio, use of rubrics, journaling, technology and other strategies of teaching. The principal plans and coordinates regular staff meetings where teachers are given the opportunity to share their experiences in the classroom and teaching techniques. Grade level meetings are arranged to articulate regarding the curriculum. The school also provides teachers and staff with tools necessary to facilitate teaching and learning. The school administration encourages teachers and staff to do self-evaluation and peer observation. The principal evaluates the teacher's performance at a post conference meeting to discuss the strengths and areas of improvement. A new faculty member is given an orientation and a mentor.

*Formal and Peer
observations*

*Safe and Caring
School*

The principal is directly linked to the achievement of the student learning expectations by providing workshops for teachers and parents. The principal is always available to give support and advice on learning difficulties that may arise. Formal, informal and peer observations are done for professional growth, assessment and evaluation. Teachers confer with parents and students to discuss student performance and follow-ups are scheduled as necessary. Behavior or academic contracts are made with students to promote student learning. The school keeps records of students who are not

working up to potential and they are monitored regularly. The school has hired a Title 1 teacher, who schedules SST meetings when needed.

Staff

The school administration and staff are professionally qualified, dedicated to the school's philosophy and mission, and committed to ongoing spiritual and professional development that will promote student learning. In addition, administration and staff are prepared to lead by example and work collaboratively to create a community of faith.

At the present time, the principal has a Bachelor's Degree in Education and a Masters Degree in Administration. All classroom teachers are either fully credentialed or actively working towards their credentials. The entire staff works professionally and possesses the experience, desire and ability to work together to create a Christian environment of learning for all students. The faculty and support staff, whether they teach religion or not, actively participate in religion certification workshops sponsored by the Archdiocese. The principal visits classrooms frequently and conducts formal evaluations twice a year. A self-evaluation is done by faculty and support staff prior to the spring observation. The principal then meets individually with the faculty and support staff to go over the formal evaluation. Teachers are given the opportunity to do peer observations to share expertise and strategies for teaching with one another. New teachers work closely with a mentor teacher to become familiar with the expectations of Holy Angels School and the Archdiocese. The two vice-principals work with the teachers and support staff in reviewing grades and are resources for professional growth.

Personnel files

Religion re-certification

*Observations
Evaluations
Mentor teacher records*

The principal and staff are fully committed to putting the school's philosophy and mission into daily practice. Student Learning Expectations (SLEs) are designed so that students know what is expected of them as a student of Holy Angels School. SLEs are displayed in each classroom and are referred to on a daily basis. Articulation is an on-going process among teachers. The principal and staff meet on a daily basis to pray together, as well as to share classroom challenges and successes. Faculty and support staff are encouraged to attend outside workshops in order to enhance teaching methods. The use of the on-site multi-sensory teacher helps enhance

Articulation meeting observations

SLEs

lessons taught in the classroom for those requiring extra help. A wide variety of teaching methods helps to ensure that each student is given optimal help in learning. The use of technology in the classroom further enhances teaching methods. Students are encouraged to use technology ethically as a learning device. At the annual retreat for faculty and staff, prior to the beginning of the new school year, the philosophy and mission statements are reviewed for relevancy.

Lesson plans

Workshops in a wide variety of areas are offered to both classroom teachers and support staff, either on premises through in-service days or off premises, sponsored by the Archdiocese or other entities. Attendance at these workshops is strongly encouraged by the principal and the school monetarily funds workshops. Release time is granted for workshops offered during class hours. Those attending the workshops are encouraged to share information with the rest of their peers. All new teachers take religion certification classes sponsored by the Archdiocese. Classroom teachers are required to keep their certification active by regular attendance at religion workshops. Peer observation and evaluation are also used as a means of professional development.

*Workshops
Religion
recertification
Peer observation*

All faculty and support staff members are practicing Catholics who share their faith with the students and each other. Many are active lectors, Eucharistic ministers, choir members or ushers in their own parishes and take an active part in school liturgies, acting as Eucharistic ministers when asked. They also lead the students in classroom prayer each day. Classroom teachers work with their students to plan school liturgies throughout the year and work with their peers to plan the liturgy for the faculty-sponsored Mass. During the annual faculty meeting and retreat before the start of the school year, liturgy is celebrated, involving all faculty and staff members. Faculty members involved as student council moderators help students create programs to promote Christian values. Classroom teachers integrate religion in all subjects across the curriculum. Faculty and staff members involved in the extended care program model their faith by example as well as by sharing life experiences with students.

*Liturgy samples
Lesson plans*

School Environment

The Catholic school is responsible for creating and nurturing a safe and healthy learning environment, which fosters community and the achievement of religious and educational goals. This environment is characterized by trust, professionalism, realistic expectations for each student, and a respect for diversity.

Holy Angels School demonstrates its responsibility toward creating a safe and healthy learning environment for the entire community by incorporating Catholic truths and values in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Through the implementation of the Safe and Caring School Program, the positive concept of discipline with dignity, conflict resolution, the Student Family Program and the use of our school counselor, students learn to respect and accept each other's differences. The student/parent handbook outlines the code of Christian conduct expected of students, parents and guardians and includes the emergency/disaster plan. To further the safety of the school community, improvements to the physical plant have been made. Some of the improvements include a security alarm system, an updated fire alarm system, an intercom system and technology system.

In cooperation with parents, students, faculty and staff and the pastor, the school policies and practices ensure a safe and positive school climate, which leads to the achievement of our religious and educational goals. Through the many activities that are made available, students are encouraged and given the opportunity to recognize and foster individual God-given talents and abilities.

A community of trust and professionalism has been built through open communication between students, teachers, administrators and parents. Comments in the parent survey confirm that the good relationship between parents and teachers is one of the school's strengths. Ongoing professional and spiritual development provides the tools necessary to support the school's goals for improving student learning. Parents are kept up to date with their child's progress through SnapGrades, the online gradebook used by

*Safe and Caring
School books and
materials*

*Discipline with
Dignity resources*

*Student/Parents
handbook*

*Emergency/disaster
plan, security and
fire Alarm Systems,
intercom system,
short circuit TV*

*Multi-cultural
Festival; Christmas
Program
Mall performances
Artwork display at
City Hall and
Mercy High
Art*

*Counseling,
retreats,
Workshops for
teachers*

Parent Survey

*Student portfolio,
use of rubrics,
progress report to
parents,
SnapGrades,
parent-teacher*

teachers. Continual monitoring and evaluating of student progress allows students to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and set realistic goals for themselves. *conferences*

The principal, faculty and staff and Parents Advisory Council came to a consensus regarding the physical improvements needed at Holy Angels School and agreed that these improvements should be part of the long-range plan for the school. The recommended physical improvements would ensure a safer, healthier and more nurturing environment for all using the school facilities. *Replacement of basketball courts*

Reporting Student Progress

The administration and staff regularly review and report to the school community progress toward accomplishing the student learning expectations.

Accomplishing the Student Learning Expectations is an on-going process monitored closely by both the principal and staff. Recognizing that students have different learning styles, many forms of assessment are used. Among them are the IOWA, rubrics, student portfolio, Archdiocesan Writing Assessment, written and oral subject tests and quizzes, written and oral reports, individual and group projects, book reports, experiments and teacher observation. Through on-site articulation meetings, progress made by students is shared among the principal, faculty and staff.

*IOWA
Rubrics
Student
portfolio
Writing
Assessment*

The principal regularly checks the teachers' lesson plans, where the various Student Learning Expectations being evaluated are color-coded to correspond with the learning expectations chart posted in the classroom. Students have had these expectations explained in age-appropriate terms for learning purposes.

*Lesson plans
Student
Learning
Expectations*

At all grade levels, student work is sent home on a regular basis for parental review. Parents and students have access to current student performance information at any time through the use of the online gradebook SnapGrades. Parents are sent email alerts for attendance, low grades and missing assignments. Mandatory parent conferences are held at the end of the first quarter. Mid-quarter progress reports are used in all grades, with a parent conference requested for students not meeting academic or disciplinary expectations. Report cards are reviewed by the vice principals and the principal and are sent home on a quarterly basis. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher whenever they feel the need.

*Progress
reports;
SnapGrades
Work Packets
Report cards
Family
envelope*

Student success is highlighted in the school's quarterly newspaper, outside bulletin boards, family envelope, school web site, parish Sunday bulletin and the Catholic San Francisco.

*Bulletin notices
Bulletin board
Family
envelope*

Regular scholastic reports from area high schools keep us informed of progress made by our graduates. Many of these graduates return to do

*School
Newspaper
Web site*

community service in our after-school extended care program, sports activities or parish religion program and parish youth group. Feedback from the high schools also gives us direction in preparing students for higher education.

*High school
reports*

School Improvement Process

The school administration facilitates school improvement, a process which:

- **is driven by a plan of action that embodies faith formation and quality instruction for all students;**
- **has school community commitment and involvement, and;**
- **effectively guides the work of the school.**

The administration and instructional staff in cooperation with the school community demonstrate accountability through the monitoring of the implementation of the school improvement plan.

Holy Angels School has an on-going long term and short term school improvement plan which is overseen and facilitated by the school principal. Through the regular review of teacher lesson plans and input from faculty and staff concerning textbooks and resources, the principal purposefully evaluates and facilitates the development and revision of the curriculum in a systematic and timely manner to achieve the school's goals. To accomplish this the principal and the finance committee work on a budget with the pastor's approval, which focuses on the needs of the school, particularly in improving the quality of instruction for all students.

Long term and short term school improvement plan

School budget

Current educational research used by the school.

The school improvement process is frequently driven by research-based findings and student safety. These are prime considerations when making any changes which directly affect our school community. To insure that the school administration remains focused on an improvement plan that embodies faith formation and quality education for all students, provisions are made to involve the pastor, faculty and staff to grow and thrive spiritually. This is accomplished by providing teacher in-services for faith growth, setting standards for faculty religious qualifications and by facilitating liturgy, retreats and prayer experiences for the school community.

Examples: Use of cooperative learning, Multiple Intelligences, student portfolio, Rubrics

Teachers' Religion Certification

Retreat and liturgy files

Joining in the improvement plan that is facilitated by the Holy Angels School administration, is a school community made up of a wide range of stakeholders. Besides parents, the Holy Angels Parents

Parents raised money to replace rusty and weak basketball courts

Advisory Council (HAPAC) and parishioners, many of the surrounding communities and businesses participate in the improvement process.

HAPAC (Holy Angels Parents Advisory Council)

Gellert Foundation

The success of our long and short term school improvement plan depends upon many dedicated people who have a common goal of administering to the faith formation of our students and who have a desire to provide quality education for all. The beneficiaries of all the improvements that these stakeholders put into action are the students whose work will be enhanced by the implementation of the improvement plan. Through total involvement of all the stakeholders in determining and monitoring the specific needs of the students and by regularly reporting progress to the school community at parents' meeting, school publications, monthly family envelopes and school website, the principal and staff demonstrates accountability. Due to the constant support and feedback from our school community, we become more effective managers of our improvement plan.

Fellow Daly City-Colma Chamber of Commerce Members Trust Fund

Monthly family envelope Parish bulletin

School quarterly newspaper

School website