

Mission Effectiveness Process for Schools of the Holy Child Jesus

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Introduction

This booklet describes the process of accountability for schools sponsored by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. The intent of the process is to engage each school community in a reflection on the mission and philosophy of the school that will become integral to the school's development and is not limited to the time of the Self Study and the Visit. The Board of Trustees with the Head of the School, in fulfilling their responsibility to the Society for the continuance and development of Holy Child mission and philosophy, ensure that this process is carried out as outlined.

The process includes

- **celebration** of the school's Holy Child heritage and its success in "meeting the wants of the age" (Cornelia Connelly)
- **self study and evaluation** based on the *Goals and Criteria for Schools of the Holy Child Jesus* so that the procedures, programs, policies and, indeed, the very culture of the school are examined in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*
- **collaboration** among Holy Child trustees, educators, and the Society that will strengthen communication and networking through working together in Training Sessions, on Visiting Committees, and on the Mission Effectiveness Committee
- **renewal** of the school's purpose so that all the constituencies will be knowledgeable in regards to Holy Child philosophy and the planning will reflect the nature and mission of Holy Child schools
- **recommitment** by all members of the school community to continue, develop, and strengthen the school's mission

Goals and Criteria for Schools of the Holy Child Jesus

Mission Statement

Schools of the Holy Child Jesus share in the mission of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus which is "to help others to believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world and to rejoice in the divine presence."*

The schools, committed by heritage to the educational mission of the Catholic Church through the philosophy and spirituality of Cornelia Connelly, endeavor to develop mature persons capable of making choices that enrich their own lives and contribute to the lives of others.

Introduction to the Goals and Criteria

The Schools of the Holy Child Jesus in the United States, members of a national network and an international community of Holy Child schools, offer an education that has a distinctive spirit. The philosophy of each Holy Child school incorporates this spirit and articulates the characteristics of the school and its efforts to respond to its own particular community.

Cornelia Connelly, foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, "developed an educational system based on trust and reverence for the dignity of every human being."* She exhorted Holy Child educators to carry this spirit to students of diverse backgrounds as they sought to respond to "the wants of the age"* in which they lived. Since 1846, these educators have helped students "to grow strong in faith and lead fully human lives,"* have promoted academic excellence, and have educated to social responsibility.

Holy Child education is both a clearly defined and flexible ideal. It is a tradition rooted in Christian values and expressions and attuned to learning opportunities that enable students to respond to life with joy, zeal, and compassion. Educators in Holy Child schools encourage students to meet diversity and change with confidence in their own gifts and in God who has made covenant with the human family.

The following pages outline the *Goals and Criteria*. The trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff commit themselves to educate by these principles and to lead the students to embrace these values for themselves.

(1983)

* Constitutions of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, revised, 1994, p. 8

Introduction to the Fourth Edition

With great joy, we publish this fourth revised edition of the *Goals and Criteria for Holy Child Schools* during the 200th anniversary of Cornelia Connelly’s birth and 146 years since the publication of the original Goals, the *Book of Studies*, written by Cornelia and published in 1863. We are grateful to all the members of our Holy Child Network communities — trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students — for their careful deliberation and input into this edition and especially to the Mission Effectiveness Committee of 2008–2009 who gave their time and expertise to overseeing the process and producing this final document.

We find in these pages our purpose, our direction and our intention to create a Holy Child community that is rooted in our Catholic faith, expands our Holy Child mission to meet the wants of our age¹, and is graced with people of wisdom and justice, integrity and peace. We embrace both our heritage and our calling to live to the fullest the genius of Cornelia’s educational philosophy that opens the mystery of the Incarnation to all times, places, cultures and peoples.

We have the awesome task and the joyous responsibility of bringing the following words of this document into actions², and we do so with the same confidence in God that Cornelia had and that she has placed in us:

“I have begun the work; others will bring it to perfection.” CC

(2009)

1. “...to meet the wants of the age and the means of spiritual mercy to be exercised...” CC 1:70; *Constitutions of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus*, 1887: 109; *Constitutions of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus*, 1983: p.10.
2. “Actions not Words” is the motto of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and of Holy Child schools.

GOAL 1

Holy Child schools foster a faith commitment that engenders a joyous personal relationship with God in addressing the challenges of the world.

- A. The faith experience within the school is drawn from an active and joyous belief that God is among us as expressed in the continuing mystery of the Incarnation.
- B. The school as an institution within the Catholic tradition welcomes people of all faiths who support its mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*.
- C. Each member of the school, including trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and parents, actively supports, participates in, and contributes to the faith life of the community.
- D. The school demonstrates that this faith commitment is a priority through its structures and the use of its resources, including
 - time and scheduling
 - finances
 - place of worship and prayer
 - personnel who provide effective leadership for a quality religion/theology program
 - personnel who provide effective leadership for a campus ministry program
- E. The campus ministry program supports the faith life of the community, including the extended community of parents and alums, by coordinating liturgies, worship services, retreats, adult education and prayer opportunities, structured service programs for students, and service activities for adults.
- F. The school community respects and celebrates the diversity of other religious traditions; all students participate in religion/theology classes and the worship life of the community.

. . . as you step on through the muddy streets, love God with your feet; and when your hands toil; and when you teach the children, love God with his little ones. CC

GOAL 2

Holy Child schools live, learn, and worship as a dynamic Christian community.

- A. The school community embodies a spirit of joy and celebration.
- B. The life of the school community is deepened by an understanding of the purposes and evolving traditions of Holy Child education.
- C. The school community prays together regularly so that all who seek God may find hope and meaning in this fragile world.
- D. The school is a community of faith, wisdom, and service in which all the constituencies actively participate.
- E. The trustees, faculty, staff, and administrators model this community of faith by praying together, participating in retreats and faith discussions, demonstrating concern for the world, and supporting each other, students, and families.
- F. The school community is composed of diverse socio-economic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.
- G. The school provides programs that teach the skills necessary to build community in the school and in the world, including, communication, conflict resolution, and peace-making, as well as opportunities to strengthen community through school-wide service projects and spirit-building activities.
- H. The school fosters the development of skills for leadership and ministry and encourages students to assume these roles in the school, church, civic communities, and choice of profession.

I'm a cosmopolitan, the whole world is my country and heaven is my home. CC

GOAL 3

Holy Child schools offer an intellectually challenging and creative program of study that develops a love of learning and academic excellence.

- A. Methods of instruction and assessment are varied, differentiated, and creative.
- B. The curriculum and methodologies challenge students to achieve their potential.
- C. The program promotes the skills necessary to understand and meet the demands of a global society and a constantly changing world, including
 - creativity
 - critical thinking
 - problem solving
 - decision-making
 - independent and collaborative learning
 - communication
- D. The program effectively integrates technology in all areas and includes instruction in its responsible and ethical use.
- E. The program incorporates local community resources.
- F. The school strives to address students' varied learning needs and makes use of other professional services for the support of students, families, and teachers.
- G. With the *Goals and Criteria* as the foundation, the academic program is regularly evaluated and adapted to "meet the wants of the age."
- H. The school has an ongoing program of professional development and evaluation for administration, faculty, and staff that incorporates Holy Child mission and philosophy as well as professional competencies.

*Remember that it is not sufficient to have begun well;
you must also persevere with courage and finish with resolution. CC*

GOAL 4

Holy Child schools work for Christian principles of justice, peace, and compassion in every facet of life.

- A. Trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff model these principles in all their interactions.
- B. Principles of justice, peace, and compassion are incorporated into the content areas of the curriculum.
- C. Structures and policies within the school model these principles in terms of
 - consistent policies and procedures for students, parents, and school personnel
 - scholarship and financial aid policies that support socio-economic diversity
 - lines of authority and governance structures
 - clearly defined channels of communication
 - procedures to address needs and concerns
 - salaries, benefits, and scheduling
 - hiring and termination procedures
 - system of evaluation
- D. Programs are provided for all constituencies that facilitate reflection leading to action for peace and justice in our neighborhoods, nation, and global community.
- E. The educational program has a global perspective, emphasizing the dignity and interdependence of all people across boundaries.
- F. The school is connected to both national and international ministries, especially SHCJ ministries, that attend to those who are poor and marginalized, in particular, women and children.
- G. The school accepts and responds to its moral obligation for the conscientious care of the earth and educates the community regarding the global impact of individual and corporate choices.
- H. The school has a dynamic community service program that requires student participation. The adults in the school community, by their involvement, model the habit of service.
- I. The program instills in students a life commitment to social responsibility and environmental stewardship realized in their “actions not words”.

Give me, O Lord, a love full of action. CC

GOAL 5

Holy Child schools create a learning climate based on trust and reverence for the dignity and uniqueness of each person.

- A. The school community affirms the value of each person.
- B. All members of the school community consistently model and teach respect through courtesy and consideration of others.
- C. Students are provided with opportunities to take initiative and act responsibly.
- D. Students are challenged to explore, develop, and share their unique gifts and to appreciate and celebrate the gifts of others.
- E. The school community respects and celebrates the diversity among its members and provides opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of other cultures and perspectives.
- F. The school fosters attitudes of collaboration, cooperation, and healthy competition.

*Trust the children and never let your confidence in them be easily shaken.
Confidence begets confidence. CC*

GOAL 6

Holy Child schools promote the personal growth and development of all who participate in the life of the school.

- A. The school fosters positive relationships among students, faculty, staff, and parents.
- B. The school provides support for each student through effective programs, including personal and academic guidance, high school/college counseling, career exploration, and referrals for appropriate counseling as needed.
- C. The entire program includes and integrates the arts in keeping with the SHCJ educational heritage.
- D. The school provides sequential programs that instill healthy attitudes and behaviors in the students' emotional, psychological, moral, and physical development, including
 - physical fitness and wellness
 - health and nutrition
 - emotional health
 - ethical and moral choices
 - sexuality
 - interpersonal relationships
 - substance abuse
 - addictive behaviors
- E. The school acknowledges the stress of competing demands on students' time and, through its procedures and practices, assists students in their efforts to recognize and achieve balance.
- F. The school teaches and promotes responsible and safe use of all digital media and has an effective and evolving school-wide responsible-use policy for the Internet and related media.
- G. The school works with the parents in promoting the overall development of the students.

Be yourself but make that self just what Our Lord wants it to be. CC

GOAL 7

Holy Child schools ensure the continuation and growth of Holy Child mission and philosophy in the school.

- A. The school is accountable to the Society of the Holy Child Jesus through the Holy Child Network of Schools and particularly in the Mission Effectiveness Process.
- B. The school has an ongoing committee of trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and possibly students that focuses on the mission and philosophy of Holy Child education, including the implementation of the Mission Effectiveness Action Plan.
- C. The board of trustees and the administration establish and maintain policies and procedures that are consistent with the *Goals and Criteria*.
- D. Holy Child educational philosophy and heritage are clearly articulated to all potential members of the school community.
- E. Processes for recruitment and evaluation of trustees, Head of School, administrators, faculty, and staff incorporate the mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*.
- F. The school has ongoing programs for all constituencies that develop an understanding of Holy Child mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*.
- G. The school has an updated long-range/strategic plan that reflects the mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*.
- H. The board of trustees and administration provide the financial and personnel resources to support the *Goals and Criteria*, including the academic and administrative areas of the school and the expanding role of technology in education.
- I. The school actively participates in the Holy Child Network of Schools.
- J. The Board Chair and Head of School communicate regularly with the appropriate leadership of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus and the Holy Child Network of Schools, fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities as set forth in the bylaws and policies, contribute to the Network, and participate in Network meetings.
- K. The trustees, administration, faculty, and staff work collaboratively with other Holy Child schools and the Director of the Holy Child Network of Schools.

You must not hide the gifts God has given, but use them in His service. CC

History of Holy Child Education in the United States

Since 1862, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus established and administered 68 educational institutions.

Types of Institutions

| | |
|--|----|
| Private Academies/ Independent Schools | 23 |
| Parochial Schools | 29 |
| Night Schools | 2 |
| Native American Missions | 1 |
| Diocesan Schools | 7 |
| College | 1 |
| Co-sponsored or endorsed | 5 |

Locations

The Society of the Holy Child Jesus has been a presence in educational institutions across the country.

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| California: | Pasadena, Anaheim |
| District of Columbia: | Washington |
| Illinois: | Chicago, Waukegan, Wadsworth, Zion |
| Louisiana: | New Orleans |
| Maryland: | Potomac |
| Massachusetts: | Melrose |
| Minnesota: | Avoca, Waseca |
| Nebraska: | Lincoln |
| New Jersey: | Summit |
| New York: | New York City, Suffern, Fleetwood, Old Westbury, Rye |
| Pennsylvania: | Towanda, Philadelphia, Sharon Hill, Chester, Kellyville, Paschallville, Rosemont, Drexel Hill, Radnor |
| Oregon: | Portland |
| Wyoming: | Cheyenne |

Holy Child Education Today

| | |
|----|---|
| 10 | Independent, Sponsored: Elementary, Middle, & Secondary |
| 4 | Co-Sponsored |
| 1 | College |

Present Holy Child Network Schools

| | | |
|-------------|--|------------------------|
| 1904 | School of the Holy Child formerly St. Walburga's; moved to Rye, NY, in 1957 | Girls, 5-12 |
| 1924 | Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child Summit, NJ | Coed, K-6; Girls, 7-12 |
| 1927 | Holy Child Academy Drexel Hill, PA | Coed, N - 8 |
| 1931 | Mayfield Junior School of the Holy Child Jesus Pasadena, CA | Coed, K - 8 |
| 1931 | Mayfield Senior School of the Holy Child Jesus moved to Bellefontaine, Pasadena, CA, in 1950 | Girls, 9 - 12 |
| 1949 | Holy Child School at Rosemont Rosemont, PA | Coed, N - 8 |
| 1959 | Holy Child Academy Old Westbury, NY | Coed, N - 8 |
| 1961 | Cornelia Connelly School of the Holy Child Anaheim, CA | Girls, 9 - 12 |
| 1961 | Connelly School of the Holy Child Potomac, MD | Girls, 6 - 12 |
| 1992 | Cornelia Connelly Center for Education New York, NY | Girls, 4 - 8 |

Co-Sponsored Schools

| | |
|------|--|
| 1997 | Washington School for Girls, Washington, DC |
| 2001 | Hope Partnership for Education, Philadelphia, PA |
| 2004 | St. Martin de Porres High School, Waukegan, IL |
| 2004 | Cristo Rey High School, New York, NY |

Glossary of Terms

Mission Effectiveness: A process by which the Network schools sustain and develop their mission and spirit.

Mission Effectiveness Activities: Those on-going processes, structures, and activities that a school incorporates into its way of “doing” and “being” for all its constituents.

Mission Effectiveness Process: A cyclical process that takes place over six years that includes celebration, evaluation, collaboration, renewal, and recommitment.

- **Celebration:** An essential element of the Mission Effectiveness process is to provide times for celebrating the school’s Holy Child heritage, past and present, and its hopes for the future during the Self Study period (includes prayer, reflection on the ministry of teaching and on the *Goals and Criteria*, the history and tradition of the school, and community building experiences).
- **Self Study and Evaluation:** The information that clearly presents how the school stands in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*, how the school is perceived by all constituencies in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*, and how the school community wants to move forward to more clearly and authentically live the *Goals and Criteria*.
- **Collaboration:** The process involves all school constituencies and other Holy Child educators.
- **Renewal and Recommitment:** After the Reflection is shared, the chairperson of the Visiting Committee leads the school in a rite of commitment to continue, develop, and strengthen the school's mission.

Mission Effectiveness Committee (MEC^{SHCJ}): Appointed by the Corporate Members/Province leadership team, whose function is to direct the system of evaluation and accountability for Holy Child schools in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*.

Society (SHCJ): Society (or Sisters) of the Holy Child Jesus founded by Cornelia Connelly in England in 1846, whose mission is “to help others to believe that God lives and acts in them and in our world and to rejoice in the divine presence.”

Province Leadership Team (PLT)/Corporate Members (CMs): Leaders within the Society of the Holy Child who are responsible for appointing the Mission Effectiveness Committee.

Steering Committee: Appointed by the Head of School in Fall of Year 1 and composed of members of the school community who lead the school community through the evaluation process. The Steering Committee is trained at a Mission Effectiveness Training Workshop.

Visiting Committee: Appointed by the Mission Effectiveness Committee and comprised of individuals who have attended the Mission Effectiveness Training Workshop, this committee undertakes the Visit and writes the Reflection.

Constituents: All the groups that make up the school community and participate in the Self Study and evaluation process (trustees, students, faculty, administration, staff, parents, and alums).

Goals and Criteria: Holy Child schools commit to educate by these seven principles. These are the standards used for the Mission Effectiveness Process.

Self Study: A reflective process based on the *Goals and Criteria* whereby the school community takes a serious look at itself in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*.

Self Study Document: The information gathered from the Self Study process that is compiled into a concise document.

School Visit: The purpose of the Visit is

- to continue the conversation with the school community that was initiated by the Self Study
- to reflect with the school community on its lived-experience of the *Goals and Criteria*
- to offer a fresh perspective on the commendations and recommendations identified by the school in its Self Study with particular attention to the *Goals and Criteria*, values, and spirit that distinguish Holy Child education

Reflection: A document written by the Visiting Committee and presented to the school community at the conclusion of the Visit.

PLT Response: A directive from the Province Leadership Team that identifies the areas that must be addressed in order to remain in good standing as a Holy Child school.

Action Plan: The school's specific description of what it intends to do in order to develop and enliven its commitment to Holy Child mission and philosophy. This document is approved by the PLT, monitored by the board of trustees and school administrators, and evaluated during the next process of self-evaluation and reflection.

Overview of the Mission Effectiveness Process in Schools of the Holy Child Jesus

The Mission Effectiveness Process is one of celebration, evaluation, collaboration, renewal, and recommitment. In order for a Holy Child school to be faithful to its responsibility for the implementation of the mission of the Society, a system of accountability entitled *Mission Effectiveness* has been established by the Society. Its intent is to engage each school community in a reflection on the mission and philosophy of the school that will become integral to the school's development. As mandated by the PLT, Mission Effectiveness is a process that

- ensures the presence and ongoing development of the mission and philosophy of Holy Child schools
- creates and facilitates a process of institutional self-evaluation based on the *Goals and Criteria*
- provides an ongoing reflection that enables a school community to articulate and report the progress and growth of the school in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*
- articulates SHCJ educational priorities for the 21st Century through a dialogue with all members of the schools' communities
- enables a school community to celebrate the Society, the other Holy Child schools and its heritage and commitment to the mission and the *Goals and Criteria*
- fosters opportunities for collaboration between and among the schools on matters related to the ongoing development of the mission and the *Goals and Criteria*

Mission Effectiveness is a cyclical process that takes place over six academic years.

Year 1

The Head of School appoints a Steering Committee in the Fall that is trained at a Mission Effectiveness Training Workshop in the Spring. The Steering Committee initiates a period of school-wide reflection on the *Goals and Criteria*, ensuring that all constituents are included. This reflection leads to the development of the Self Study Document in the Fall of Year 2.

Year 2

The Steering Committee completes and mails the Self Study Document by January 10 and prepares for the Visiting Committee. The Visit takes place in the Spring over a four-day period during which the Visiting Committee meets with all the school constituencies, verifying the conclusions of the Self Study. The Visiting Committee develops a Reflection that responds to the school's Self Study Document and the Committee's experience during the Visit and provides recommendations for the

school in fulfilling its Holy Child mission. The Reflection is shared with the school community and submitted to the PLT.

Year 3

Utilizing the school's Self Study along with the Visiting Committee's Reflection, the PLT sends its Response. This is an official document from the Society of the Holy Child Jesus that guides the school community in relation to its mission as a Holy Child school. It contains directives for the school that are to be developed into an Action Plan. When the school receives the PLT Response, the school formulates an Action Plan that is approved by the Board, faculty, and staff. The Action Plan is then sent to the Network Office for final approval by the American Province Leadership Team. After final approval, the school begins work on the implementation of the Action Plan.

Years 4-6

The school implements the Action Plan. In the Spring of Year 5, an update on the implementation of the Action Plan is sent to the Network Office. The Action Plan Update is approved by the Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

Province Leadership Team (PLT)

- 1) Appoints the members of the Mission Effectiveness Committee.
- 2) Receives the Visiting Committee Reflection with a copy of the school Self Study.
- 3) Responds to the Self Study and Reflection documents in a letter (PLT Response) to the Head of School and Board Chair.
- 4) Receives the Action Plan and responds in written form to the school, Board, and Network Office.
- 5) Receives Action Plan Update in Year 5.
- 6) Receives and responds to the Mission Effectiveness Committee's assessment of the Mission Effectiveness Process.

Mission Effectiveness Committee (MEC^{SHCJ})

- 1) Appointed by the PLT and composed of no fewer than seven and no more than sixteen members, at least one person from each school.
- 2) The term of a committee member is one three-year term with a possible second term of three years.
- 3) The Director of Holy Child Network of Schools provides leadership and assistance to the committee.
- 4) Qualifications for membership
 - a) Minimum of three years' experience in Holy Child schools
 - b) Understanding of the *Goals and Criteria*, in words and action
 - c) Positive, contributing membership on the staff/faculty/board
 - d) Competency in her/his area of the school and an appreciation of the other areas of the school
 - e) Discretion and ability to keep material/discussions confidential
 - f) Skills in organization, writing, basic computer
 - g) Leadership abilities necessary to chair a Visiting Committee, including conducting group discussions, addressing large and small groups, as well as presenting the process at the Training Workshop
 - h) Ability to communicate clearly and effectively
 - i) Collaborative style that enables working as a team
 - j) Ability to inspire listeners
 - k) Willingness and ability to commit to the time required

- 5) Responsibilities
 - a) Direct and focus the system of evaluation and accountability for Holy Child schools in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*
 - b) Appoint the Visiting Committee for each school
 - c) Provide training for the Visiting Committee and the school Steering Committee
 - d) Appoint one of its members or former members to chair each Visiting Committee and give specific preparation to the Visiting Committee
 - e) Evaluate the process with the Steering Committee

Head of School

- 1) In the Fall of Year 1, forms a Steering Committee composed of members of the school community (that must include a Board member) whose differing gifts allow for the organizational and celebratory functions necessary to complete a successful Self Study.
- 2) Is a member, but not the Chair, of the Steering Committee.
- 3) Attends the Mission Effectiveness training workshop with the Steering Committee in the Spring of Year 1.
- 4) Provides resources (time, space, equipment, financial, etc.) for the Steering Committee to complete the Self Study.
- 5) Informs and energizes the school community about the Self Study process.
- 6) Ensures that the Board is actively involved in the Self Study process.
- 7) Meets with the Chair of the Visiting Committee prior to the Visit.
- 8) Monitors the progress of the Steering Committee, ensuring that the report will be completed on schedule.
- 9) Reads and approves the final version of the Self Study report and presents to the Board for final approval.
- 10) Meets with the Visiting Committee Chair at the end of each day.
- 11) Meets with members of the Visiting Committee on Wednesday morning to review the Visiting Committee Reflection before its formal presentation to the school community.
- 12) May write a letter to the Network Director responding to the Visiting Committee Reflection to question or disagree with the Reflection.
- 13) Leads the school in the formation and implementation of the Action Plan.

Board of Trustees (at least one Trustee is on the Steering Committee)

- 1) Dedicates time at its meetings for discussion of the Self Study during Years 1 and 2.
- 2) Discusses and approves the Self Study Document before it is submitted.
- 3) Schedules a full Board meeting on Monday of the Visit and allocates at least one hour to meet with the Visiting Committee.
- 4) Receives PLT recommendations and ensures that an Action Plan is created and implemented.
- 5) Approves the Action Plan Update that is sent to the Network Office.

School Steering Committee

- 1) Composed of members of the school community whose differing gifts allow for the organizational and celebratory functions of the committee.
- 2) Appointed by the Head of the School from among the members of the school community.
- 3) Must be a Board member on the committee who is a liaison to the Board.
- 4) Attends a training session in the Spring of Year 1 and meets with the Visiting Committee Chair. The Chair of the Steering Committee and 3 other members of the committee attend the Training Workshop.
- 5) Maintains constant communication with the Visiting Committee Chair, conferring on issues regarding the Visit, including
 - a) Housing and meals for the Visiting Committee, this is a school responsibility and should be in the budget;
 - b) Transportation to the school of the Visiting Committee;
 - c) Special needs of the Visiting Committee;
 - d) Work space at school and meeting sites;
 - e) Availability of computers at school and housing work sites;
 - f) Proposing and arranging a schedule for the visiting days that includes
 - i) meetings with the Visiting Committee the day before the school Visit, as well as during the school Visit when needed;
 - ii) tour of the school on Sunday and any parts of the locale that would be helpful to the Committee's understanding of the school;
 - iii) some opening format to introduce the Visiting Committee to the school;
 - iv) meetings with all constituency groups, including the Board of Trustees on Monday during a full Board meeting;

- v) time and place at the end of the Visit for the sharing of the report and the Recommitment ritual;
 - g) The progress and development of the Self Study document.
- 6) Leads the school community through the Self Study process that involves the following responsibilities:
- a) Designing a process for the school Self Study that includes all the constituencies of the school;
 - b) Developing a calendar for the Self Study process that allows for dialogue and celebration among all the various constituencies;
 - c) Facilitating a Self Study process that reviews the last Action Plan and enables participants to reflect on their present experience of the *Goals and Criteria* within the context of the school community;
 - d) Budgeting (with the Head) for costs of the Visiting Committee, except travel;
 - e) Writing the school Self Study Document and presenting it for acceptance by the faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees;
 - f) Pre-arrangement of meetings with school constituencies, including the Board of Trustees at a full Board meeting on Monday, and the availability of the Head of School each day of the Visit;
 - g) Sending a copy to the Network Office and all members of the Visiting Committee by January 10th; the Visiting Committee may subsequently ask for clarification regarding the Self Study Document.
- 7) Provides times of celebration and prayer. This is an essential element of the process and should be given appropriate time during the school year.
- 8) Evaluates the Mission Effectiveness Process and Visit during the Network Director's next visit to the school.

The Mission Effectiveness Process

The Self Study Process (Years 1 and 2)

This process is a reflection on the *Goals and Criteria* by the school community. It is an ongoing conversation among the diverse constituencies in the school. Through this process of articulation, the school community grows in its understanding of the challenges it faces, as the community strives to live the vision expressed by the *Goals and Criteria*.

The object of the Self Study is to take a serious look at the school community in relationship to the *Goals and Criteria* set by the Society of the Holy Child. While it is not designed to be an exhaustive process, it is to be a healthy self-evaluation. The Steering Committee will set up the process by which all school constituents will express their views of the school in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*. The information will be compiled into a document (see following pages) which should clearly present how the school stands in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*, how the school is perceived by all constituencies in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*, and how the school community wants to move forward in more clearly and authentically living the *Goals and Criteria*.

Celebration

The Steering Committee provides opportunities for the school community to celebrate its past and present—and especially its hopes for the future—during the Self Study period. These opportunities include prayer, reflection on the ministry of education, reflection on the *Goals and Criteria*, reviewing the history and traditions of the school, and community building experiences.

Self Study Document

Each of the seven *Goals and Criteria* must be addressed. In an effort to see the school as it really is, the Steering Committee should be familiar with the full description of each goal and criterion. The Steering Committee will organize the process by which the community will study itself in terms of the *Goals and Criteria*.

Each constituent group of the community must have input into this document. The school may choose to gather data in many ways. In fact, this exercise should be approached as data collection, anecdotal sharing, and collaborative assessment. Parents, students, teachers, administrators, alumnae, and trustees will be invited to complete surveys, participate in discussion groups, and record facts and feelings about the school.

In writing the document, information is gathered that describes the manner in which each of the *Goals and Criteria* is being addressed in the school. Each group of constituents are asked for perceptions, views, and experiences. What actions, activities, and events most affected each group? How does each group see the school fulfilling each Goal and corresponding Criteria?

The document that evolves from these conversations becomes the basis of the wider conversations among the school community, the Visiting Committee, and the PLT. A draft of the Self Study Document is written after all the information is gathered, analyzed, reflected upon, and organized. This initial input is presented to select constituencies/cross-constituencies groups (faculty, staff, and Board) for further input and clarification as to whether this draft of the document reflects their lived experience. Improvements that might be made are indicated and actions that might be taken are suggested to strengthen the *Goals and Criteria*. The information gathered from this second round is once again reflected upon and organized by the Steering Committee.

Look at the school as a whole and determine which areas are worthy of commendation and which areas need action or attention. Describe the process by which the school community accomplished the Self Study. Describe the programs that have been set in place to continue the development of the *Goals and Criteria*. Appendices should include a Board List, Board Committee List, Faculty/Staff List, strategic plan, previous Action Plan, handbooks, view books, newspaper, annual report, PR materials, etc.

Reminders

- Identify the corresponding criteria in Section 3 of the Self Study, the evaluation of the school in relation to each of the *Goals and Criteria*.
- Relate each commendation and recommendation to a Goal(s).
- Number the pages of the Self Study Document.
- Be sure to include a description of the committee in place to oversee ongoing goals-based reflection and activities (see Goal 7, Criteria B).

Sample of Steering Committee Questions

Use the *Goals and Criteria* as the basis for your questions. Below are additional questions that the Steering Committee might ask the various constituencies in the development of the Self Study Document.

Board of Trustees Questions

1. What image do you believe the school has in the community?
2. How do the policies you have developed support the *Goals and Criteria*? Give examples.
3. Why do you volunteer to serve this school?
4. What do you believe are the most important contributions made by the Board since you joined?
5. What can the Board do to help the students, faculty, and parents?
6. Do you think the school community understands your role?
7. What is the greatest challenge you see for the school?
8. What are the top three priorities for the school?

Alums Questions

1. What is the relevance of Holy Child philosophy in your life today?
2. What impact has your education in this school had on you?
3. How do you view the school today?
4. Are you proud to have been a Holy Child student?

Students Questions—in discussions

1. How does your experience at this school compare with your experience at other schools?
2. What gift did you discover that God has given you?
3. Why is this school good for you?
4. What is the best thing you have witnessed in our school?
5. In what ways do you see the *Goals and Criteria* lived out in our school?
6. How can the school live out the *Goals and Criteria* more fully?
7. Are you proud to be a Holy Child student?

Parents Questions

1. How has your child grown/changed since starting in the school?
2. Did you choose the school because it is Holy Child?
3. What are the differences you see in your child's education and the education your friend's children receive at other schools?
4. How has the Holy Child education affected your family or you as a parent?
5. What kind of a person would you like your child to be and is the school providing that for him or her?

Administrators/Faculty/Staff Questions

1. What are we doing intentionally to address the Holy Child mission in our teaching and learning?
2. What evidence of the spirit of Holy Child do you see in the life of our school?
3. What is missing? How can we deepen the presence of any of the *Goals and Criteria* in our school?
4. Which Goal do you most closely relate to in your everyday teaching experience?
5. What have you experienced in your years at this school that most resonates with the *Goals and Criteria*?
6. What do you think our school does best in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*?
7. Identify three experiences within your content area that express how you have challenged your students in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*.
8. How has Holy Child education impacted your life?
9. What would you like to see changed?
10. What has been your greatest challenge in living the *Goals and Criteria*?
11. What surprised you about this school?
12. Why are you staying at this school?
13. How are different talents appreciated?
14. Describe decisions that you have made that have been impacted by the *Goals and Criteria*.

Self Study Document Template (Due by January 10)

Mission Effectiveness in Schools of the Holy Child Jesus

Self Study Document

School Name: _____

Head of School: _____

Administrators and Administrative Staff:

Steering Committee Members and positions:

1. Short History: a description of any significant developments and changes in the school since the last Self Study.
2. Copy of the Action Plan from the last process and a summary evaluation of the ways in which the Action Plan was achieved. This is separate and does not replace the 5-year written response to the Action Plan. The 5-year written response, also called the Action Plan Update, should be included as an attachment to the Self Study.
3. Description and evaluation of the school in relationship to each of the *Goals and Criteria* according to what the school community perceives to be the
 - school strengths
 - areas to re-emphasize
 - new programs to initiate (if necessary)
4. Having considered the school in relation to each of the *Goals and Criteria*,
 - specify and describe areas in which the school commends itself (Major Commendations)
 - specify and describe areas in which the school community recommends that it must take action (Major Recommendations)
5. Specify and describe the process that has taken place among the trustees, students, faculty, administration, staff, parents, and alums during the Self Study.
6. Include a description of existing programs/committees in place that deal with initial and ongoing education and discussion of the *Goals and Criteria*, as well as Holy Child Values, Virtues, Mission, Philosophy, and History, with the Board of Trustees, administrations, faculty, staff, students, parents, and alums.

7. In addition to Network mandated activities, provide an account of the school's participation in the Network. (Note: These activities include those that go beyond the Network mandated activities and is a separate and vital piece to the Self Study. See page 42, *Relationship to the Society and the other Network Schools*, for guidelines on how this section will be reflected upon by the Visiting Team).

8. Appendices (please attach, send separately, or send in electronic format)
 - Board List
 - Board Committee List
 - Board book (last year of Board minutes)
 - Faculty/Staff List
 - Strategic Plan
 - School handbooks, viewbooks
 - Newspaper, annual report
 - Public relations materials, etc.
 - Action plan update

The School Visit (Year 2) and Beyond (Years 3 – 6)

Responsibilities of the Steering Committee leading up to and during the Visit

The Steering Committee coordinates an onsite pre-visit meeting with the Visiting Committee Chair to finalize plans and review the schedule for the Visit.

Upon completion and submission of the Self Study, the Steering Committee may be asked by the Visiting Committee to resubmit sections of the Self Study that are unclear.

The school Visit is focused on the *Goals and Criteria* and the Self Study. It takes place over four days, beginning Saturday evening and continuing until Wednesday. The Steering Committee is responsible for making all appropriate accommodations for the Visiting Committee. Meetings with school constituencies, with the exception of the meeting with the Head, are always in groups—large or small. The school Visit includes meetings with all constituencies or at least those applicable to the understanding of the Self Study.

Constituencies to include

- 1) A regularly scheduled full Board of Trustees meeting on Monday
- 2) Head of School
- 3) Administrators
- 4) Faculty, not including administrative faculty
- 5) Staff
- 6) Parents, not including school employed director.
- 7) Students
- 8) Alums, not including school employed director

Schedule

- 1) Develop a schedule and have it approved by the Visiting Committee chair.
- 2) Organize a tour of campus on Sunday with the option of having Sunday Mass/Liturgy on campus.
- 3) Organize Visiting Committee meetings with all constituency groups
 - With the Steering Committee on Sunday to finalize plans
 - With parents, alums, on Sunday
 - With the full Board of Trustees on Monday, allocating an hour for meeting with the Visiting Committee
 - With faculty, staff, administrators, and students on Monday and Tuesday
 - With committee responsible for ongoing focus on Goals and Criteria
- 4) Introduce the Visiting Committee to the student body at a Monday morning assembly so that they can address the school.
- 5) Organize an opportunity for the Visiting Committee to participate with the school community in prayer.
- 6) Coordinate the Recommitment ritual at the end of the Visit. The Network Director sends out the prayer to the Steering Committee chair. While the school sets up the Recommitment Rite, the Visiting Committee leads it.

School Community Response (Year 2)

- 1) Following the school Visit, the Steering Committee of the school may write a Response to the Visiting Committee's Reflection if they wish to question or disagree with the Reflection.
- 2) The Response is sent to Network Director, who presents it to the PLT.

PLT Letter (Year 2)

- 1) The PLT receives the Self Study, the Visiting Committee Reflection, and the school community response, if applicable.
- 2) The PLT writes a Response Letter to the Head of School and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The Letter
 - responds to the data presented to Corporate Members/PLT regarding the school's embodiment of the *Goals and Criteria*, the school's Self Study and the Visiting Committee Reflection
 - is the official document from the Society of the Holy Child Jesus that guides the school community in formulating its Action Plan
 - commends the school community in relation to its mission as a Holy Child school and makes recommendations that direct the school community through the Board of Trustees and the Head of School to attend to those specific areas that are critical to maintaining the Society's sponsorship of the school

Action Plan (Year 3)

- 1) After receiving the PLT's Response Letter, the school community formulates an Action Plan in the fall of Year 3. The Action Plan is the school's specific description of what it intends to do in order to develop and enliven its recommitment to the mission and the *Goals and Criteria*.
- 2) A group consisting of, but not limited to, the Head, a Trustee, an administrator, and a faculty member writes the Action Plan.
- 3) The Action Plan is specific in responding to each of the recommendations or requests referred to in the PLT's Response Letter. Justification for specific actions and the desired outcomes should be included in the Action Plan. See Appendix #2 for a suggested format for the Action Plan.
- 4) The Action Plan is approved by the school community and sent to the PLT for review and then sent to the Network Office.
- 5) The PLT will communicate to the school its acceptance of the Action Plan upon review.
- 6) The school implements the Action Plan.

Action Plan Implementation (Years 4-6)

The school continues to implement the Action Plan.

Action Plan Update (Year 5)

- 1) The school community writes an update of the Action Plan in Year 5, describing what has happened during the years as part of, or as a result of, enacting the Action Plan.
- 2) A group consisting of, but not limited to, the Head, a trustee, an administrator, and a faculty member writes the Action Plan Update with the approval of the school community.
- 3) The Action Plan Update must be specific enough to demonstrate what was accomplished and how the actions have continued to address the directives of the PLT Response Letter.
- 4) The Action Plan Update must be approved by the Board and is then sent to the PLT and the Network Office.

The Visiting Committee

- 1) The Visiting Committee, appointed by MEC^{SHCJ}, is selected from individuals who have been trained at the Mission Effectiveness committee workshop.
- 2) The Visiting Committee is chaired by a member or former member of the MEC^{SHCJ} and may be composed of a Head of School, a trustee, an administrator or member of the administrative staff, and a teacher. The size of the Visiting Committee is determined by MEC^{SHCJ} in consultation with the Head of School.
- 3) The Visiting Committee arrives Saturday before the visit and remains through the reading of the Recommitment rite on Wednesday afternoon.

Before Visit Responsibilities

Visiting Committee Chair

- 1) Meets with Steering Committee during Training Workshop to
 - ensure timeline
 - plan the pre-visit of the school
 - discuss Self Study Document
 - plan for the Visit, including
 - travel, transportation, and hospitality arrangements
 - use of a car during visitation
 - schedule of meetings and activities (all constituencies involved); include time to walk around school
 - ensure school schedule includes an assembly, prayer service, etc.
 - meeting space at lodging site
 - meeting space in the school
 - computer equipment and technical support
 - expenses
 - time for welcome and introduction of Visiting Committee to school community
 - a schedule that allows Visiting Committee to meet with each member of the school in a small group setting
 - board meeting on Monday—(ensure you are on the agenda)
 - small group meetings with faculty on Monday at the end of the day. (teachers who are administrators will be seen in the administration meeting and do not attend the faculty meeting)
 - meeting with Religion teachers and campus ministry as a separate group(s), as well as part of the faculty groupings
 - time to visit classes and see the life of the school
 - reading of the Visiting Committee report and the Recommitment rite
- 2) Continues conversation with Steering Committee Chair as planning goes forward.

- 3) Initiates contact with the Head of School prior to the Mission Effectiveness Committee fall meeting and follow-up by contacting Steering Committee Chair (when appointed).
- 4) Directs the plan for the Visit; must be clear about expectations.
- 5) Contacts Visiting Committee members to initiate travel planning.
- 6) Pre-visits the school to clarify Self Study inquiries, finalize schedule, and verify all preparations of the Visit.
- 7) Reviews composition of the groups before Visit.
- 8) Confirms planning with the Network Director.
- 9) Sets up meetings or conference calls with Visiting Committee members to
 - discuss Self Study Documents, school materials, etc.
 - determine if the Self Study Document is complete and clear
 - keep track of issues concerning the school
 - attend to emerging topics
 - plan the conversations during the Visit
 - begin composing a rough draft of the Reflection
 - arrange the practicalities of travel
 - plan Visiting Committee schedule and tasks for members

Visiting Committee

- 1) Receives Self Study Document by January 10; this includes school materials (PR and Admissions materials, newsletter, curriculum, handbooks, strategic plan, Board policies), Action Plan Update, and evaluation.
- 2) Reads and reflects on the Self Study Document, materials, and school website.
 - a) Questions to guide the reading of the Self Study
 - Who was included in the process and to what extent?
 - Were all the *Goals and Criteria* discussed?
 - What comes through your reading of it?
 - What are the major themes?
 - Does the Self Study match the conclusions the school makes?
 - Is there anything missing that is significant?
 - What clarifications do you need from the school?
 - b) Looks at the Self Study Document in relation to the *Goals and Criteria*.
Develop questions that further understanding
 - What does the school see as strengths?
 - What is commendable but not mentioned?
 - What does the school see as areas for re-emphasis?

- What is missing from the study of the *Goals and Criteria*? (only if it's significant or obvious)
- c) Determines if the Self Study Document is clear and if any clarifications are necessary. If so, revisions to the Self Study will be requested.
 - 3) Reviews and critiques the school's materials, including website, to determine if they reflect Holy Child identity.
 - 4) Participates in meetings or conference calls with Visiting Committee members to discuss Self Study Document.

During Visit Responsibilities

Visiting Committee Chair

- 1) Meets with Head of School at the end of each day.
- 2) Asks to meet with constituencies in different places on campus.
- 3) Checks in with Steering Committee every day to ensure the flow of the Visit.
- 4) Ensures that evenings are free to write (except Board meeting on Monday).
- 5) Verifies that the school has set-up for the Recommitment Rite at the end of the Visit. The Campus Minister is responsible for setting it up, the Visiting Team runs it, and the Network Director sends out the Recommitment Rite to the Steering Team Chair.
- 6) Following the Visit
 - writes thank you notes to Visiting Committee
 - sends a copy of the signed Reflection to the Network Director
 - contacts Network Director to review the Visit
 - shares appropriate reflection on the process at the next Mission Effectiveness Committee meeting

Visiting Committee

- 1) Meets on Saturday afternoon.
- 2) Uses every gathering as a teachable moment. At the beginning of each meeting, goes over the reason for the Mission Effectiveness Process and where they fit into the process. Can begin by saying, "As you know, the school has been in a process of self-reflection and celebration..."
- 3) Meets with Steering Committee Chair / Committee on Saturday evening.

- 4) Asks the Steering Committee about involvement of the different constituencies. How many different constituencies were involved? How much involvement did each of them have? How often? How were groups selected? What happened in developing the Self Study?
- 5) Plans the questions to be asked based on the Self Study Documents or input from the discussion.
- 6) Begins writing the Reflection on Sunday. The format for writing the Reflection is outlined in this manual. The strengths, areas to reemphasize, and new programs should be clearly listed in the document.
- 7) Meets with all constituencies in small groups. Some groups (e.g., parents, alums) can be met with on Sunday. Students, staff, and administrative groups can be met with during the day on Monday and Tuesday. The whole faculty, except for faculty who are administrators, is met with in small groups on Monday afternoon. Religion teachers and campus ministry are met with in addition to the faculty meeting,
- 8) The Chair and some members of the Visiting Committee meet with the Head of School on Wednesday morning to share the entire Visiting Committee Reflection report.
- 9) The entire Visiting Committee signs the final version of the Reflection document and leaves a signed copy with the Head of School.
- 10) Shares the entire Reflection orally with the faculty and staff and other members of the school community during the closing Recommitment rite.
- 11) Writes thank you notes to the Head of School, Steering Committee, faculty, food services, etc.

Formatting the Reflection Document

- Part 1** Introduction, this should include
- thank yous, specifically for the Board of Trustees, the Head of School, and Steering Committee
 - your experience of the school
 - your overall impressions of the school, specifically mentioning welcome and hospitality (if true), sense of Holy Child Spirit. Use ‘Holy Child’ words
- Part 2** Take each of the recommendations from the last Action Plan and confirm that the recommendations have been fulfilled or resolved. If they have not been or there is still an area to be strengthened, then include it in Part 4 as a separate point in the recommendations.
- Part 3** Go through each of the *Goals and Criteria* and for each Goal include
- what you read, heard and saw that connects to the Self Study, noting commendations and recommendations
 - what else you observed or heard that is not included in the Self Study, noting commendations and recommendations

The above is written in paragraph format. If possible, refer to the group from which you received the input—e.g. “we heard the alums speak of their great love for the school” or “we heard the students ask for greater responsibility to be given to them in the upper grades.”

The recommendations that the school has made in its Self Study should be referred to in this document, either as your recommendations or if you are not recommending one or more of the school’s recommendations, then you should refer to this in comments such as

- you do not see the action rising to the level of recommendation
- not fitting under the Goals
- not what you heard from the constituencies

Part 4 Recommendations

Your recommendations must connect explicitly to specific Goals and the Goal number(s) must be identified for each recommendation. Recommendations should be broad in nature, allowing the schools to decide on the specifics to address them.

Attention should be given especially to the following areas as they apply to each constituency in the school community (students, trustees, parents, faculty/administration/staff, alums). See *Visiting Committee Guidelines*.

- Mission, Philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*
- Holy Child Values and Virtues
- Educational Program
- Relationship to the Society and the other Network schools

The following sentences should begin and conclude the recommendations:

Beginning

We recommend to the American Province Leadership Team of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus the following in regards to (School name_____)

Ending

After the Province Leadership Team reviews all of your materials and our recommendations, they will send a formal letter asking you to create an Action Plan around their specific requirements.

Part 5 Final thank you

Visiting Committee Guidelines

Always ask each group about their participation in the process and the recommendations they made. It is important to ask all constituencies about the major recommendations and commendations from the Self Study and verify that they agree that these are the areas of focus. The following areas are to be looked into at all schools, regardless of whether the matter comes up in the Self Study, for they are at the heart of a Holy Child school's connection to its history and its future.

Mission, Philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*

1. Are all the constituencies aware of the mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*? How are the mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria* explained, shared, and developed?
2. Check that the Goals are included in all school documents: mission statements, view books, handbooks (for parents, students, and faculty), school website and publications (for parents and alums).
3. Review all internal and external documents (including school website) to insure that the school is clearly identified as
 - a Catholic independent school
 - founded and sponsored by the Society (or Sisters) of the Holy Child Jesus
 - belonging to the Holy Child Network of Schools
4. Review job descriptions, contracts, and handbooks. Do they reflect the school's mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*? Is there a clear system of accountability, review, and evaluation?
5. Review faculty meeting and Board meeting agendas and minutes. Are mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria* discussions included? Do they pray before meetings?
6. Review any Head's letters in public documents (newsletters, admission, development pieces, etc.). Do they speak of the *Goals and Criteria*? Do they "sound" Holy Child? Do they give expression to the Head's role as spiritual leader of the community?
7. Look at the prayer life of the school. What is the quality of prayer and worship in the school community? What is it among students, faculty, alums, and parents? Do the faculty and staff pray together? Is there a yearly retreat for faculty and staff? Do the trustees, parents, or alums have retreats?
8. Find out how the faith life is nurtured intellectually and affectively for students, faculty, and staff. Is the school empowering the students to take a leadership role in the Church?

9. Verify the school's commitment to social justice. Is there a strong commitment to justice and diversity issues? How is it manifested in the school program, curriculum, and admissions? Is there an ongoing program and/or process that allows for discussion of social justice issues (environment, prejudice, peace, racism, globalization, hunger, etc)? How does the faculty in their respective disciplines provide the students with the tools and abilities to critique social and moral issues?
10. Find out about the school's service program. Is it vibrant and inclusive? Is it required for all students? Is there a reflection piece to the service program? Are there components of the program for parents, alums, and faculty?
11. Look at the psychological support system of the school. How do the school's structures, processes, and procedures support the psychological development of the students? How do individual members of the school support the psychological development of the students?
12. Verify that the sustainable part of Mission is emphasized. This can be insured through orientations of all constituencies and evaluations of school employees are tied to the mission and goals. Ongoing mission development and education is essential for all constituents.

Holy Child Values and Virtues

Look for these essential Holy Child values and virtues:

- **JOY** in the students and the faculty/staff
- **REVERENCE** that is given to everyone in the community
- a **TRUSTING** environment
- an **OPENNESS** to new ideas
- **SIMPLICITY**
- **LOVE** that does for others
- an active **COMPASSION** that flows into a **SERVICE** program that includes everyone and takes the community outside its boundaries (not a one-time event)
- **MODELING** of these virtues by the adults in the community
- **CREATIVITY**
- **CRITICAL THINKING**
- a **LEARNING** community where faculty and students are involved in an ongoing discussion of things that matter
- a sense of **BEAUTY**
- **GLOBAL** and **ENVIRONMENTAL** awareness

Educational Program

1. The curriculum and academic program should be reviewed only as they connect with the *Goals and Criteria*. The Visiting Committee **DOES NOT** deal with specific academic programs or strategies. The specifics of the general educational program are left to the other accrediting agencies (WASC,

Middle State, etc.). As there are many ways to achieve the same end, a school has the right to determine the particulars of their program; therefore, be careful to recommend only areas that are part of the *Goals and Criteria*.

2. Are there programs, classes, or integration into classes that deal with the topics in the *Goals and Criteria*, especially voices of marginalized peoples, economic justice, environmental issues, peace and justice—local, national, and world-wide?
3. Is there a creative and innovative attitude toward education?
4. Find out about the support for faculty. Is there an expectation of professional growth? How is it encouraged? How is it evaluated? Is there a required professional development program in place? Who oversees it? Is it tied into faculty and staff evaluations? Do faculty meetings deal with professional development, planning, etc.? What is the structured mentoring and evaluation process in place for all faculty, staff, and administrators?
5. What advances has the school made in diversifying its student body, faculty, and Board? What programs or meetings do faculty and administration attend that deal with diversity? What programs has the school sponsored that deal with diversity, environmental, and social justice issues?

Relationship to the Society and the other Network Schools

1. Look at the school's participation in all activities with the Network and other Network schools. Do all constituents have knowledge of the Society and other Network schools? Check with the Network office to receive input regarding the school's participation at required meetings (Heads' Meetings, Annual Meetings, teachers' meetings, Mission Effectiveness Training Workshops, student meetings, exchange program, etc.), as well as their presence on the Mission Effectiveness Committee, Mission Effectiveness Visiting Committees, and participation in the Network web site.
2. What programs or structures exist to create this awareness, to connect the school to the Society and other Holy Child schools? What have they done with other Holy Child schools? Have they visited one?
3. Does the school take leadership in the Network? Do they initiate any communication or interaction other than what is sponsored by the Network office? Have they participated in the student or faculty exchange with another Holy Child school? Have they planned or exchanged information, materials, and actual class lessons?
4. In what ways do they communicate (especially important for trustees and administrators) with the Society, with other Holy Child teachers, administrators, etc.?

VISITING COMMITTEE DOs AND DON'Ts

Do

- Share the facilitation of the group
- Look for visual representations of Holy Child, Cornelia Connelly, Network, etc.
- Hear the “collective voice” of the school community
- Begin each group meeting with a brief review of process
- Read and reread the Self Study and previous Action Plan
- Read other related materials sent from the school (school culture)
- Filter all questions prior to visit through Visiting Committee Chairperson
- Relay special needs to Visiting Committee Chairperson
- Keep focused on the *Goals and Criteria*
- Ask about the process as well as the document
- Model a community of educators
- Stay through to the very end
- Affirm
- Meet with groups—not individuals
- Meet with staff separately from faculty
- Spend more time listening than talking
- Sign the Reflection document
- Write thank you notes

Don't

- Meet with individuals
- Talk about your school excessively
- Depart from the Self Study Document unless there is a glaring omission or group interaction that leads you to a new area
- Focus on evaluation of academic program, facilities, or personnel (this is not a WASC or Middle States accreditation)
- Make comparisons to your own schools
- Make travel arrangements too tight
- Hold meetings with constituencies in the Visiting Committee workspace
- Use the word “rigor”; instead use challenging, etc.

SAMPLE OF VISITING COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

The following are only a sample of questions that may be asked by the Visiting Committee. The Board should be able to respond to any aspect of their own Self Study Document.

For Board

- 1) How are the *Goals and Criteria* reflected in your decisions and policy making?
- 2) What process is used to deepen the Board's understanding of Holy Child philosophy, the *Goals and Criteria*, and the Holy Child Network of Schools? [Goal 7]
- 3) What is the Board's program for ongoing development in the mission of the school, Holy Child philosophy, and the Catholic nature of the school? Do you know what the program is for the rest of the constituents? [Goal 7]
- 4) How do you participate in the Network? [Goal 2]
- 5) How is your role on this board distinct and different from your role on other Boards?
- 6) What orientation process is used to educate new trustees to the school, to the role of the Board, to the role of each trustee, and to the role of Board committees? Who does it?
- 7) What are the Board's priorities? Is there a strategic plan that governs your direction, priorities, and decisions? (You should see it.) [Goal 7]
- 8) Is there a process in place that facilitates active communication between Board members and parents, as well as between Board members, faculty, and the various other constituencies of your school? [Goals 2, 6]
- 9) In what ways does the Board interact with the Society? In what ways does the school interact with the Society? [Goal 7]
- 10) How do you and the Head of School work collaboratively with the Director of the Holy Child Network of Schools in order to strengthen educational and faith development? [Goals 2, 7]
- 11) What ongoing structures are in place for Board evaluation, Board Chair evaluation, and Head evaluation (which must include input from all trustees, administrators, and some faculty)? [Goal 7]

* Tell us about your participation in the process.

For Administration

- 1) Are there ways in which you use the *Goals and Criteria* in faculty and student discussions and when making decisions? Explain.
- 2) How are the *Goals and Criteria* a part of a five-year vision for your school? What steps are you taking to realize this vision?
- 3) How do you influence your school's constituencies with regard to spiritual development and issues of justice? [Goals 1, 4]
- 4) How do the *Goals and Criteria* inform your actions?
- 5) How do you create time for there to be a joyous faith community that attends to our life in God? [Goals 1, 2]
- 6) How do you assess a teacher/administrator/staff candidate's readiness to embrace Holy Child philosophy/theology in the hiring process? [Goals 2, 7]
- 7) Is it part of the job description of middle management to oversee and develop Goals with faculty, students, etc.?
- 8) How are the philosophy and the *Goals and Criteria* used specifically in the personal/professional development and evaluation of faculty and staff?
- 9) Is there an ongoing program of orientation, understanding, and growth for all constituencies? What is it for faculty, staff (especially new faculty and staff), board, parents, students, alums?
- 10) Are the *Goals and Criteria* part of job descriptions? Are faculty/staff held accountable for the *Goals and Criteria*?
- 11) What does the idea of belonging to a larger whole—the Holy Child Network of Schools—mean to you and the school? [Goal 2]
- 12) Where are you struggling to implement the *Goals and Criteria*? Where is the school struggling to implement the *Goals and Criteria*?
- 13) How does your school create a learning climate based on trust and reverence for the dignity and uniqueness of each person? [Goal 5]
- 14) In what ways does your school make it possible for all who participate in its life to be themselves and to make themselves all that God wants them to be? [Goals 5, 6]

- 15) [*For Head*] How do you work collaboratively with the Director of the Holy Child Network of Schools in order to strengthen educational and faith development?
- 16) [*For Head*] What is your role in furthering and developing the Mission and the *Goals and Criteria*?
- 17) What are you doing to develop the instructional methodology of the faculty members? To facilitate the use of technology in the classes? [Goal 4]
- 18) What ongoing structures are in place for administration, faculty, student, and parent development in mission/Holy Child philosophy/Catholic nature? [Goals 2, 7]
- 19) What ongoing structures are in place for administration and faculty hiring, mentoring and evaluation according to mission and philosophy? [Goal 7]
- 20) How does the Admission process educate the parents in Holy Child philosophy and the *Goals and Criteria*? [Goal 7]
- 21) How are you going to continue the process of reflecting on the *Goals and Criteria*?

* Tell us about your participation in the process.

For Faculty

- 1) Why are you choosing to teach/work at a Holy Child school?
- 2) What sets your school apart from others?
- 3) Tell us about activities you do at your school outside the classroom. How do the *Goals and Criteria* impact these activities?
- 4) Describe the faculty interaction professionally and socially. [Goal 2]
- 5) Tell us about the Faculty Evaluation process. [Goals 4, 7]
- 6) Who “pushes” the *Goals and Criteria* in the school?
- 7) How does the academic program provide the skills for critical thinking, problem solving, and decision -making? [Goal 3]
- 8) How do you deal with discipline in the classroom? [Goals 5, 6]
- 9) What things have the faculty done to learn and use varied methods of instruction? [Goal 3]

- 10) What strategies are in place to support a struggling student (academically, personally)?
- 11) Can you give examples of how you integrate issues of justice, morality, and faith into your curriculum? [Goal 4]
- 12) How do you integrate community resources into your courses and programs? [Goal 3]
- 13) What is your role in planning the curriculum? Are the *Goals and Criteria* ever a part of this discussion and decision? [Goals 3, 4]
- 14) What opportunities for professional development have you taken in the last year? [Goal 3]
- 15) What do you think you can do to move the school closer to the *Goals and Criteria*?
- 16) What interaction do you have with other Holy Child schools? [Goal 2]
- 17) How are you connected to the Holy Child Network? [Goal 2]
- 18) Do school decisions flow from the philosophy and the *Goals and Criteria*? How?
- 19) How do you feel the *Goals and Criteria* have influenced your professional/departmental/personal goals?
- 20) What structures or processes are in place for faculty hiring, mentoring and evaluation according to the mission and Holy Child philosophy?

* Tell us about your participation in this process.

For Staff

- 1) Why do you choose to work at a Holy Child school?
- 2) What sets your school apart?
- 3) How do the *Goals and Criteria* influence your interactions with your constituencies?
- 4) Describe your relationship with the faculty. [Goals 2, 6]
- 5) Describe your relationship with students. [Goals 2, 6]
- 6) Describe your relationship with the administration. [Goals 2, 6]

- 7) What structures or processes are in place for staff hiring, mentoring, and evaluation according to the mission and Holy Child philosophy? [Goal 7]

* Tell us about your participation in this process.

For Students

- 1) What does the Holy Child philosophy (“way”) mean to you? Give examples
- 2) Do you think attending this Holy Child school has made a difference in your life?
- 3) What makes your experience at your school different from other schools?
- 4) In what way does your school make you feel unique? [Goal 5]
- 5) How do you recognize and support each other’s talents? [Goal 5]
- 6) In what ways are you able to express your talents and gifts?
- 7) Who in the school can you go to in order to talk about important things? [Goals 5, 6]
- 8) How do you support each other in the face of disappointment? [Goal 2]
- 9) What is best about your classes?
- 10) What challenges you in your classes? [Goal 3]
- 11) Can you give examples of how students show respect for the uniqueness of each other? Show respect for the school? [Goal 5]
- 12) How do you make new students feel part of the school? Part of the group? Not left out? [Goals 2, 5]
- 13) Since this is a Catholic school, your spiritual growth and faith are important to your development. How have your years at this school furthered your relationship with God?
- 14) Give us examples of how the school is preparing you for service to other people outside of your school community? How will you serve others in the future? [Goal 4]
- 15) What do you want to do in life and what kind of person do you want to be?

- 16) Give us examples of how the school is preparing you to be an honest, truthful person and one who treats others justly, charitably, compassionately? [Goals 1, 2, 4]
- 17) How did the school celebrate during the Mission Effectiveness process?

* Tell us about your participation in this process.

For Alums

- 1) How did your Holy Child education contribute to who you are today?
- 2) Did you come away from Holy Child with a sense of Christian Community? [Goal 2]
- 3) Did your academic program and the skills you learned prepare you for the challenges you faced? [Goal 3]
- 4) In what ways did community service during your school years impact your life today? [Goal 4]
- 5) How was your uniqueness valued at the school? [Goal 5]
- 6) How did your education prepare you for the real world and help you approach life in a balanced way? [Goals 1, 6]
- 7) How do you spread the word about Holy Child education? [Goal 7]
- 8) Has the religious education and spiritual formation you received at the school impacted your spiritual life today? [Goal 1]
- 9) Why do you think alums choose Holy Child for their children?

* Tell us about your participation in this process.

For Parents

- 1) Why did you choose this Holy Child school for your child/children?
- 2) What do you feel is the greatest gift your children will receive from the school?
- 3) Do you feel an integral part of this community? How? Is there something special about being a parent at this school? [Goal 2]
- 4) In what ways are your children supported and challenged in their academic program? [Goal 3]

- 5) How has your family been impacted by your children's experience at the school, especially regarding service and responsibility for others? [Goal 4]
 - 6) How is the uniqueness of your children valued at the school? [Goal 4]
 - 7) Is it your perception that the children are given responsibility? [Goal 4]
 - 8) How are they encouraged to take on something independently? [Goal 4]
 - 9) In what ways are they treated with dignity? [Goal 5]
 - 10) Holy Child education deals with the whole child—mind, body, spirit, heart, emotions. Are you familiar with the programs that develop your children emotionally, physically, artistically, and aesthetically?
[Goal 6]
 - 11) What impact has the school's religious nature and values had on your children and family? [Goal 1]
 - 12) How are you as parents educated in the *Goals and Criteria*? By whom? How often? [Goal 2]
 - 13) How do you spread the word about Holy Child education?
 - 14) What ongoing processes or structures are in place for educating you, as parents, in the mission, philosophy and the *Goals and Criteria*? [Goal 7]
- * Tell us about your participation in this process.

APPENDIX ONE: TIMELINE

The process is a six-year cycle with the visit usually taking place during March or April of the second year.

| | | School/Steering Committee | MEC ^{SHCJ} | Visiting Committee | Corporate Members/PLT |
|--------|--------|---|--|--|-----------------------|
| Year 1 | Fall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head appoints Steering Committee • Head budgets for the visit the following year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Visiting Committee • Plan Training Workshop and invite participants | | |
| | Spring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Comm. attends Training Workshop • Steering Comm. initiates Reflection on <i>Goals and Criteria</i> • All constituents must be included • Begins information gathering process • Plans celebrations • Coordinates with Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold Training Workshop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Chair attends Training Workshop | |
| Year 2 | Fall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies points of convergence and divergence • Draws conclusions of school community's perceptions of its strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis the <i>Goals and Criteria</i> • Confirms conclusions with school community • Completes the written self-study and shares final draft with school community | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting Comm. Chair contacts Steering Committee Chair • Visiting Comm. Chair visits the school | |
| | Winter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sends copy of final draft of Self Study to Chair of Visiting Comm. and Network Office by Jan. 10, including all supporting materials. | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---|---|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares for visit | | | |
| | Spring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares for visit • Visits school • Receives Visiting Committee's Reflection • School community may respond to Reflection and send response to Network office to be presented to Corp. Memb./PLT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of MEC meets with Corp. Memb./PLT annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits school • Sends copies of Self Study and Reflection to Corp. Memb./PLT and MEC ^{SHCJ} | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive copies of Self Study and Reflection • Write letter to school community • Send copy to Network Office • Hold annual meeting to review report |
| Year 3 | Fall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulates Action Plan • Have Action Plan approved by Board and Faculty/Staff • Sends Action Plan to Network office to be presented to Corp. Memb./PLT | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive Action Plan • Review Action Plan |
| | Winter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes changes to the Action Plan (if requested by the Corp. Memb./PLT) • Sends revised Action Plan to Network Office to be presented to Corp. Memb./PLT • Implements Action Plan | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give approval or request changes from school |
| Year 4 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements Action Plan | | | |
| Year 5 | Spring | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements Action Plan • Sends Update on Action Plan to Network Office | | | |
| Year 6 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements Action Plan | | | |
| | | School/Steering Committee | MEC ^{SHCJ} | Visiting Committee | Corporate Members/PLT |

APPENDIX TWO: ACTION PLAN FORMAT SAMPLE

| <u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Action Steps | Justification | Desired Outcome(s) | Person(s) Responsible | Timeline | Resources Needed |
| 1. First Action Step | | | | | |
| 2. Second Action Step | | | | | |
| 3. Third Action Step | | | | | |
| 4. Fourth Action Step | | | | | |

Holy Child Network of Schools

Holy Child Network Office

1341 Montgomery Ave
Rosemont, PA 19010
610-626-1400 (tel) 610-525-2910 (fax)

Connelly School of the Holy Child

9029 Bradley Boulevard
Potomac, MD 20854-4699

301-365-0955

FAX 301-365-0981
www.holychild.org

Cornelia Connelly School of the Holy Child

2323 West Broadway
Anaheim, CA 92804-2398

714-776-1717

FAX 714-776-2534
www.connellyhs.org

Holy Child Academy

475 Shadeland Avenue
Drexel Hill, PA 19026-0413

610-259-2712

FAX 610-259-1862
www.holychildacademy.com

Holy Child Academy

25 Store Hill Road
Old Westbury, NY 11568-1299

516-626-9300

FAX 516-626-7914
www.holychildacademy.org

Cornelia Connelly Center for Education

220 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009-7473

212-982-2287

FAX 212-982-0547
www.connellycenter.org

Mayfield Junior School of the Holy Child Jesus

405 South Euclid Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101-3199

626-796-2774

FAX 626-796-5753
www.mayfieldjs.org

Mayfield Senior School of the Holy Child Jesus

500 Bellefontaine Street
Pasadena, CA 91105-2499

626-799-9121

FAX 626-799-8576
www.mayfieldsenior.org

Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child

44 Blackburn Road
Summit, NJ 07901-2499

908-522-8100

FAX 908-277-1838
www.oakknoll.org

Holy Child School at Rosemont

1344 Montgomery Avenue
Rosemont, PA 19010-1629

610-922-1000

FAX 610-525-7128
www.holychildrosemont.org

School of the Holy Child

2225 Westchester Avenue
Rye, NY 10580-1940

914-967-5622

FAX 914-967-7210
www.holychildrye.org

Co-Sponsored Schools

Washington Middle School for Girls

THEARC Campus
1901 Mississippi Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20020

202-678-1113

FAX 202-678 1114

www.washingtonmiddleschoolforgirls.org

Hope Partnership for Education

1701 N. 8th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122-2807

215-232-7821

FAX 215-232-7067

www.hopepartnershipforeducation.org

Cristo Rey, New York High School

112 E. 106th Street
New York, NY 10029

212-996-7000

FAX 212-427-7444

www.cristoreyny.org

St. Martin de Porres High School

501 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue
Waukegan, IL 60085

847-623-5500

FAX 847-623-5604

www.smdpwaukegan.org

Higher Education

Rosemont College

1400 Montgomery Avenue
Rosemont, PA 19010-1699

610-527-0200

FAX 610-527-0341

www.rosemont.edu