Holy Child

NETWORK OF SCHOOLS

# Goals for Schools *of the* Holy Child Jesus

FIFTH EDITION

# Introduction *to the* Fifth Edition

With great joy, we publish the fifth edition of the *Goals and Criteria for Holy Child Schools* amidst the 175th celebration of the founding of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus in 1846 and 160 years since the publication of the original Goals *(Book of Studies)* written by Venerable Cornelia Connelly 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 2022–2023 Mission Effectiveness Committee, 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 age[1], 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 actions[2], and we do so with the same confidence in God that Cornelia had and that she has placed in us.

OCTOBER 2026

"I have begun the work; others will bring it to perfection."

—*Cornelia Connelly*

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.

## 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 which enrich their own lives and contribute to the lives of others.

## GOALS AND CRITERIA FOR SCHOOLS IN THE HOLY CHILD NETWORK

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. 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/Catholic values and expressions and attuned to learning opportunities which 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 seven Goals and Criteria for Schools of the Holy Child Jesus. The trustees, administrators, faculty and staff commit themselves to educate by these principles and to lead the students to embrace these values for themselves.

*Constitutions of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, 1983 revised, 1998, p. 10

## Goal 1

### Holy Child Schools foster a faith commitment that leads to a joyous personal relationship with God in addressing the realities of the world.

- As expressed in the continuing mystery of the Incarnation, the faith experience within the School is drawn from a joyous belief that God is among us, which is the core of Holy Child education.
- The School, as Catholic and independent, welcomes and values people of all faiths who support its mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria of Holy Child Schools*.
- Each member of the School, including trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and parents, actively engages in and supports the faith life of the community.
- The School demonstrates its faith commitment through its structures and the use of its resources. This includes time and scheduling; finances; place of worship and prayer; personnel who provide a quality religion/theology program "that meets the wants of the age" and an effective campus ministry program that empowers student leaders of faith and justice.
- The campus ministry program supports the faith life of the community, including parents, trustees, and alums by coordinating liturgies, worship services, retreats, adult education, prayer opportunities, and services.
- The School community respects and celebrates the diversity of religious traditions, and encourages all students to explore and deepen their own faith journey.
- As a School community, all students participate in religion/theology classes and the worship life of the community so that all Holy Child students/alums will realize themselves as belonging to a spiritual community and being empowered to carry forward the Holy Child mission and goals by living out their moral, ethical, and faith-based values.

> "...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."
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

## Goal 2

### Holy Child Schools live, learn and worship as a dynamic Catholic community.

- The School community embodies a spirit of joy and celebration.
- The life of the School community is enriched by an understanding of the unique purpose and evolving traditions of a Holy Child education.
- The School community regularly gathers in prayer and service so that all who seek God may find hope and meaning in this fragile, ever-changing world.
- The School is a community of faith, wisdom, service, and reflection where all constituencies actively participate in prayer, retreats, and faith discussions, demonstrating concern for the world and supporting each other.
- The School community reflects a diversity of socio-economic, racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. All members embrace this diversity by creating an environment of acceptance and belonging.
- The School provides programs that teach the necessary skills to build and strengthen community in the School and in the world including communication, conflict resolution, and peace-making.
- The School fosters the development of leadership and ministry skills, and encourages students to assume leadership roles in the School, church, civic, and their future professional communities.

> "I wish we could pray so fervently as to obtain for all the true spirit of the Holy Child and the love of all that He loved and taught."
>
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

## Goal 3

### Holy Child Schools offer an intellectually challenging, innovative, and creative program of study that develops academic excellence, encourages curiosity, and instills the joy of learning.

- Instruction and assessment are varied, differentiated, innovative, and reflect current research and best practices.
- The curriculum and instructional strategies challenge students to achieve their individual potential while emphasizing curiosity, risk-taking, and a passion for learning.
- The program teaches the necessary skills to understand and meet the demands of a global society and a changing world including critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, independent and collaborative learning, leadership, communication, growth mindset, and self-advocacy.
- The program appropriately integrates technology in curricula and includes instruction in digital citizenship.
- The School fosters an understanding and expectation of academic integrity.
- The School strives to support students' varied learning needs and utilizes other professional services to benefit students, families, and teachers.
- The academic program is regularly evaluated to integrate the Goals and Criteria, meet the wants of the age, and provide a culturally responsive education.
- The School has formal professional and personal development and evaluation programs for administrators, faculty, and staff that incorporate the Holy Child mission and philosophy.
- The program includes collaboration with the local community and other global resources.

> "Remember that it is not sufficient to have begun well; you must also persevere with courage and finish with resolution.
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

## Goal 4

### Holy Child Schools promote Catholic social teaching in every facet of life as we carry out our motto, "Actions Not Words."

- Trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff model justice principles in all of their actions and decisions so that students learn from what they see, hear, and experience.
- Principles of Catholic social teaching, such as compassion, justice, peace, inclusion, and equity, are embedded in the content areas of the curriculum.
- Drawing on these principles, programs are provided for all constituents that facilitate reflection on racism, bigotry, and all other systemic social injustices, thereby moving us to action for the common good in the School, neighborhoods, nation, and global community.
- The educational program has a global perspective, emphasizing the dignity, value, and interdependence of all peoples.
- The School has structures and consistent policies for all constituents that promote social justice principles and create an environment of inclusivity and belonging, including: scholarship and financial aid policies, lines of authority and governance structures; clearly defined communication protocols, and salary, benefits, hiring, evaluation, and termination policies.
- The School is connected to both national and international ministries, particularly Holy Child ministries, and stands in solidarity with those who are poor and vulnerable, especially, women, children, and refugees.
- The School accepts and responds to its moral obligation for the conscientious care of creation through its policies and procedures, and by educating the community regarding the global impact of individual and corporate choices.
- The School has a dynamic community service learning program. The adults in the community, by their involvement, model the habit of service and inspire in the students a lifelong commitment to social responsibility and "Actions Not Words."

> "Give me, O Lord, a love full of action."
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

## Goal 5

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

- The School community affirms the uniqueness of the whole child and the value of each person.
- All members of the School community consistently model and teach respect and empathy, creating an inclusive environment.
- The School community values and celebrates the diversity of all its members and provides opportunities for knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of all cultures, perspectives, experiences, and differences.
- The School empowers the students to take initiative, act responsibly, and advocate for the dignity of each person, while providing opportunities for students to act on these values.
- The School challenges the students to explore, embrace, develop, and share their unique characteristics and gifts, and to recognize and celebrate the talents and abilities of others.
- The School fosters attitudes of growth, collaboration, cooperation, and healthy competition.

> "Trust the children and never let your confidence in them be easily shaken. Confidence begets confidence."
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

## Goal 6

### Holy Child Schools promote the personal growth and development of all who participate in the life of the School.

- The School fosters positive and respectful relationships among students, faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and all who interact with the School community.
- The School supports the students through social and emotional learning, academic and personal guidance, high school/college counseling, career exploration, and referrals for appropriate external services.
- The School develops a wellness program that explores interpersonal relationships, promotes inclusivity and belonging, and instills healthy attitudes and behaviors for the students' emotional, psychological, spiritual, social, moral, and physical development.
- The School experience and the entire program includes and integrates the arts in keeping with the Holy Child educational heritage.
- The School acknowledges the stress and competing demands on students, as well as on all members of the School community, and takes action to promote well-being and achieve balance.
- The School has an effective and evolving policy that teaches and promotes responsible digital citizenship.
- The School partners with parents/guardians in promoting the overall development and wellness of the students.

> "Be yourself but make that self just what Our Lord wants it to be."
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

## Goal 7

## Holy Child Schools ensure the continuation and growth of the Holy Child mission and philosophy in the School.

- 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.
- The School has an ongoing committee that may include trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and others that focuses on the mission and philosophy of Holy Child education, including the implementation of the Mission Effectiveness Action Plan.
- The Board of Trustees and the administration establish and maintain policies and procedures that are consistent with the *Goals and Criteria*.
- Holy Child educational philosophy, mission, history, and heritage are clearly articulated to all potential members of the School community.
- The School has ongoing programs for all constituencies that develop an understanding of Holy Child mission, philosophy, and the *Goals and Criteria*.
- The Board of Trustees and administration ensure that the mission, philosophy, and *Goals and Criteria* are incorporated in the processes for recruitment, professional development, and evaluation of trustees, Head of School, administrators, faculty, and staff.
- The School creates and regularly updates a strategic plan that reflects the mission, philosophy, *Goals and Criteria*, and secures the future financial stability of the School.
- The Board of Trustees and administration provide the financial and personnel resources to support the *Goals and Criteria*, including innovation, technology, and new trends in educational pedagogy.
- The School (Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and alums) actively participates in the Holy Child Network of Schools by its involvement in Network meetings and activities, collaborating with other Holy Child Schools and Holy Child ministries.
- The Board Chair and Head of School communicate regularly with the Director of the Network, fulfilling their respective roles and responsibilities as set forth in the School's bylaws and Network contracts and policies. They also attend and participate in Network meetings, contributing their wisdom and experience in planning the future of the Network in collaboration with the Network Board and Director.

> "You must not hide the gifts God has given, but use them in His service."
> —*Cornelia Connelly*

# Holy Child Network *of* Schools

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