

## Sample Questions for The Cardinal Newman Society Self-Assessment and Reflection Tool (for Catholic Identity) include guidance to support growth in targeted areas.

### Principle I - Inspired by Divine Mission

- 1.) How well are members of the school community informed of the school's Catholic mission and educational philosophy to ensure understanding and commitment? 1 2 3 4
  
- 2.) How well does the school, through the mission statement, governing documents, policies, and publications, express institutional commitment to the Church's teaching on the divine mission of Catholic education? 1 2 3 4

### Feedback

- 1.) There is an annual orientation process/program for new school members (parents, students, teachers, volunteers, board members) to introduce them to the mission of Catholic education and the school's education philosophy. It's important that all members of the community understand and agree to this mission and philosophy. To explore this topic further see [\*All Employees Matter in the Mission of Catholic Education; Community Matters to Catholic School Mission; Working with Nontraditional Families in Catholic Schools\*](#); Principle I questions from [\*Principles of Catholic Identity in Education: Faculty and Staff In-Service, Board Reflection, Parent Guide\*](#).
  
- 2.) The Second Vatican Council lays out seven principle purposes of Christian education: that the baptized will know salvation, know the faith, worship God, be conformed to Christ, grow in virtue, grow the Church, evangelize, and contribute to the common good. *Gravissimum Educationis* tells us: "A Christian education does not merely strive for the maturing of a human person as just now described, but has as its principal purpose this goal: that the baptized, while they are gradually introduced the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of Faith they have received, and that they learn in addition how to worship God the Father in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:23) especially in liturgical action, and be conformed in their personal lives according to the new man created in justice and holiness of truth (Eph. 4:22-24); also that they develop into perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:13) and strive for the growth of the Mystical Body; moreover, that aware of their calling, they learn not only how to bear witness to the hope that is in them (cf. Peter 3:15) but also how to help in the Christian formation of the world that takes place when natural powers viewed in the full consideration of man redeemed by Christ contribute to the good of the whole society. Wherefore this sacred synod recalls to pastors of souls their most serious obligation to see to it

that all the faithful, but especially the youth who are the hope of the Church, enjoy this Christian education” (#2).

To explore this topic in more depth, see [Principles of Catholic Identity in Education: Faculty and Staff In-Service](#) (Principle I); [Policy Guidance for Mission and Philosophy Statements](#); and [Choosing a Catholic School Begins with Mission](#).

## Principle II - Models Christian Communion and Identity

- 1.) How well does the school ensure that employees and volunteers live in communion?  
1 2 3 4

### Feedback

- 1.) Professional spiritual and theological formation for teachers is extremely important for a school’s Catholic identity - and the formation of students, as the faith is most often “caught” than “taught.” Best practice is to “Recruit teachers who are practicing Catholics, who can understand and accept the teachings of the Catholic Church and the moral demands of the gospel, and who can contribute to the achievement of the school’s Catholic identity and apostolic goals... As a catechetical leader in the Catholic school, the principal is called to provide opportunities for ongoing catechesis for faculty members... The distinctive Catholic identity and mission of the Catholic school also depend on the efforts and example of the whole faculty... All teachers in Catholic schools share in the catechetical ministry... While some situations might entail compelling reasons for members of another faith tradition to teach in a Catholic school, as much as possible, all teachers in a Catholic school should be practicing Catholics.” (*National Directory for Catechesis (2006) 231, 233.*) For further information regarding employee formation see [\*All Employees Matter in the Mission of Catholic Education; Amicus briefs to 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals regarding ministerial exception\*](#); and [\*Key Points on Supreme Court’s Our Lady of Guadalupe Ruling on Ministerial Exception. The Identity of the Catholic School for a Culture of Dialogue, 2022, 14, 26, 47\*](#)

## Principle III- Encounters Christ in Prayer, Scripture, and Sacraments

- 1.) How often does the school provide opportunities for participation in the Mass and reception of the Eucharist? 1 2 3 4
- 2.) How does the school form students in the meaning, value, and proper participation in the Mass? 1 2 3 4

## Feedback

1 & 2.) Section 8 from the *Directory for Masses With Children* reads, “A fully Christian life is inconceivable without participation in the liturgical services in which the faithful, gathered into a single assembly, celebrate the paschal mystery...The sign and pledge of that communion is participation in the Eucharist table, for which children are being prepared or led to a deeper realization of its meaning. This Liturgical and Eucharistic formation may not be separated from their general education, both human and Christian; indeed it would be harmful if their liturgical formation lacked such a basis.”