



St. Patrick's Catholic School
Strategic Plan

2026-2031





Saint Patrick Catholic Church

4101 NORBECK ROAD • ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20853

RECTORY 301.924.2284 • FAX 301.929.3017

E-MAIL: parishoffice@stpatrikdw.org • WEBSITE: <http://www.stpatricksmd.org>

August 2026

Dear Saint Patrick School Families and Friends,

The *St. Patrick's Catholic School Strategic Plan 2026-2031* is complete! I am grateful to the members of the school advisory board, under the leadership of the school principal, who have worked diligently to create this plan of action for the good of the parish community of which the school is a significant asset.

This document not only outlines who we are in the present moment but envisions how our efforts here and now will continue to blossom in the years ahead. Not only are we concerned about the temporal achievement of our students, but also about their spiritual nourishment and development as well. We are pleased with all the families who entrust their children to our care. Yet our primary role as a Catholic school is to support our Catholic parents in their duty and responsibility of training their children in a deeper understanding and acceptance of the Catholic Faith. The heart and soul of this acceptance is founded in the love of God, friendship with Jesus Christ the Lord, and a genuine selfless service of neighbor with the supreme goal of welcome into the Kingdom of Heaven!

This strategic plan is meant to assist in and to motivate the pursuance of these sacred initiatives! I am pleased that the parish Pastoral Council has examined and has wholeheartedly approved this strategic plan. We prayerfully beseech the blessings of Almighty God that we might please Him in all things as we work together for the good of all!

With every grace and blessing, I remain

Sincerely in Our Lord,

The Reverend Monsignor Charles J. Parry
Pastor of Saint Patrick Catholic Church



August 2026

Dear St. Patrick School Community,

As we look ahead to the future of St. Patrick School, I would like to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to the development of our new five-year strategic plan.

First and foremost, thank you to our dedicated School Board and the members of the strategic planning focus groups for the tremendous amount of time, thought, and care they invested throughout this process. Your leadership and commitment to the mission of St. Patrick School are appreciated and valued.

I would also like to thank our parents, alumni, junior high students, and faculty members who participated in surveys and shared valuable feedback. Your voices, ideas, and honest reflections helped guide the focus groups and allowed meaningful conversations and forward-thinking ideas to emerge. The collaboration and shared vision demonstrated throughout this process truly reflect the strength of our community.

To our teachers, especially, thank you for your daily dedication to our students and to the mission of Catholic education. Every day, you work tirelessly to create classrooms rooted in faith, kindness, academic excellence, and community. The impact you have on our children and on the culture of St. Patrick School cannot be overstated.

I am incredibly proud of our school community and all that we continue to accomplish together. There is tremendous excitement surrounding both the new initiatives and the continued traditions that make St. Patrick School such a special place. We are a growing and thriving community, and I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.

Please know as we begin implementing this five-year strategic plan, I am confident that, together, we will continue to strengthen and grow St. Patrick School while remaining grounded in our Catholic faith and mission.

Thank you again for your partnership, commitment, and belief in our school community.

With gratitude,

Christie Anne Short, Principal

A Letter from the School Advisory Board

St. Patrick's School opened in 2004 with 42 students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. Our Founding Pastor, Monsignor Kane, envisioned a thriving school rooted in the greater St. Patrick's parish community. More than twenty years later, the school is at capacity from Pre-K through 8th grade, with a waitlist in multiple grades; 100% of our graduating students are accepted into Catholic high schools; teacher and student retention is high; academic achievement holds strong. Our community culture is among the most distinctive things families cite when they describe why they chose — and remain at — St. Patrick's. This legacy of excellence, built over more than twenty years, is the fruit of many families, teachers, clergy, and staff who gave generously and believed in what this school could be.

During the 2025-2026 school year, the School Advisory Board undertook the challenging and rewarding task of honoring those foundations while looking honestly at where our school must grow, adapt, and invest for the next five years. The result is this strategic plan. We hope that as you read this plan, you see your input reflected in it.

How We Built This Plan

This plan was shaped by our community. In January 2026, we launched a survey and engagement process that exceeded every expectation — more than 250 parents, faculty, students, and alumni shared their priorities and hopes across six focus areas, each connected directly to a core committee of the School Advisory Board.

Beyond the survey, we hosted focus-group conversations with community members who wanted to go deeper; gathered input from faculty; and engaged school leadership. We carried all of that into a structured planning process that identified goals, surfaced alignment gaps and worked to resolve them, and tested our priorities against what is achievable, while remaining rooted in prayerful discernment and our Catholic mission.



A Letter from the School Advisory Board *continued*

Our Approach to this Plan

This is a living document, not a finished product. It reflects our community's best, current collective thinking, and we expect it to evolve. For each of our six focus areas, we have articulated where we hope to be in five years and the goals that will guide us.

We also want to be transparent about trade-offs. Many of the goals in this plan depend on resources we do not yet fully have in place — budget, staff, volunteer time, and capacity. We cannot pursue all of them at once, and some of the hardest decisions about sequencing and prioritization are still ahead of us. The Advisory Board commits to working through those decisions alongside school leadership and our community, communicating our choices clearly, and returning to the community when circumstances change.

Our Commitment

The School's motto is "Faith, Service, and Academics." Everything in this plan flows from that foundation. Working in partnership with Monsignor Parry, Miss Short, faculty, and parent volunteers, the School Advisory Board is honored to steward this next chapter of St. Patrick's story, and is deeply grateful to every member of our community who helped shape it. We commit to keeping you informed of our progress along the way and to sharing concrete ways you can be involved in helping us achieve it. We look forward to working alongside our entire community together, in service of our children and the school we love.

The St. Patrick's School Advisory Board, Spring 2026

Andrew Rackiewicz, Co-Chair

Lara Woodruff, Co-Chair

Katie Ballengee

Amanda Fangmeyer

Erin Murphy

Nathan Beecher

Kyrus Freeman

Christie Anne Short, Principal

Jake Blauvelt, Faculty

Whitney Greaney

Christy Turner

David Boynton

Steven Marconi

Paul Richelmi

Tess Casafranca

Rosina Mitchell

Janice Vargo

St. Patrick School Mission Statement

The mission of St. Patrick School is to provide quality, traditional Catholic education in a secure, caring, and nurturing community. In cooperation with the families of our school and parish, we help students experience self-worth and respect, and guide them to develop to their fullest potential while pursuing academic excellence.

Our role is to teach the Gospel message of Jesus to our students so they may develop a strong relationship with God — and with each other — and in doing so empower them in the world. Finally, we stress the acquisition of academic, interpersonal and leadership skills that enable students to live and transmit Christian values, and respect and appreciate diversity in a changing world.

St. Patrick School Belief Statements

- Children are our community's most valuable asset, and every child has special gifts.
- All children have the right to a safe and nurturing learning environment, free of physical and emotional intimidation.
- The Catholic school is an integral part of the community of faith and a ministry of the church.
- Education develops the whole person — spiritually, ethically, emotionally and socially.
- Education is a shared responsibility of the school, student, family, parish community and God.
- Every child's unique learning styles are respected by teachers and students.
- Understanding and appreciation of race, religion and culture are critical in a diverse world.
- Self-esteem is directly related to success.
- Risk-taking and an openness to change are necessary for continuous development.
- Every child will grow and learn together through work, prayer and play.

A Ministry of St. Patrick Parish

St. Patrick School is intimately connected to the life of St. Patrick Church, and, in partnership with parents as the primary educators of their children, supports the development of an active Catholic environment within the home. The School promotes an active life of faith among its students and families, including participation in Sunday Mass, and serves as an instrument of evangelization, drawing families into a deeper relationship with Christ and His Church. While admission priority is given first to our parish community, St. Patrick's School opens its doors to all who seek to grow in active faith and discipleship.



Academic Excellence

St. Patrick's is committed to delivering outstanding educational outcomes and continuously strengthening our instructional programs. We invest in curriculum, teacher growth, and student support so that every learner is challenged, cared for, and prepared for the years ahead.

Academic Excellence

Our Strategic Vision

Every student at St. Patrick's is supported by clear, consistent instruction, accessible pathways to help, and teachers who are well-prepared to meet them where they are. Families understand and feel confident in their child's academic journey from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, and our school community is equipped to navigate a rapidly evolving technological world with wisdom, courage, faith, and discernment.

Our Goals

> Goal 1: Build an AI-Ready School Community

Using the papal encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* as our guide, we will ensure that our teachers, students, and families understand both the promise and the pitfalls of artificial intelligence in education. AI tools will be introduced thoughtfully — first through professional development and parent education, and over time through intentional curriculum integration and investment in tools that align with our values and student needs.

> Goal 2: Strengthen Academic Communication with Families

We will redesign how we communicate student progress so that every family — whether in the lower school or junior high — understands what to expect at each grade level and how to support their child's growth. Back to School Night, progress reporting, and other touchpoints will be updated to make the academic journey legible and welcoming for all families.

> Goal 3: Build Accessible and Coordinated Student Support

We will clarify and strengthen our student support structures, explore dedicated personnel, and ensure students and families have a clear, trusted path to the right support.

> Goal 4: Uphold Fair, Consistent, and Well-Resourced Teaching

We will invest in professional development that helps teachers and staff better serve students with diverse learning needs, including those with diverse learning needs. We will ensure that teaching and grading practices are transparent, objective, and consistent across every discipline, supporting students to thrive not only academically, but also physically, creatively, and artistically.



Catholic Identity & Service

Faith formation and service are at the heart of St. Patrick's character and values. We seek to nurture the spiritual growth of every member of our school community by integrating Catholic teachings across grade levels, building meaningful service experiences, and celebrating our faith traditions in partnership with our parish and families.

Catholic Identity & Service

Our Strategic Vision

Catholic faith formation is woven into the daily rhythm of school life — not layered on top of it. Students can articulate and demonstrate Catholic values. Service is hands-on, student-led, and transformative. Our parish collaboration is strong and valued. Sacramental preparation is a meaningful family experience, and prayer and the sacraments are accessible and embraced by students, families, and faculty alike.

Our Goals



Goal 1: Embed Faith Formation in the Rhythm of School Life

We will create consistent, visible faith experiences across grade levels, exploring ideas such as annual faith-based themes, virtue programs, and integration of Catholic teaching into the curriculum. Students will encounter their faith not just in religion class or at Mass, but in the culture, decor, and daily practices of their school community. We will build resources and communication channels that bring faith formation home to families.



Goal 2: Expand Meaningful, Hands-On Service

We will move beyond item collection toward direct, student-led service experiences that build empathy and genuine civic responsibility. Our students — especially in the middle grades — will grow into servant leaders who take initiative, own their impact, and develop a lasting sense of obligation to the communities around them.



Goal 3: Strengthen Our Partnership with the Parish

A strong school-parish relationship is essential to our Catholic identity. We will build and maintain a consistent, valued collaboration with parish religious education staff so that sacramental preparation is coordinated, family-facing, and transformative.



Goal 4: Cultivate a Culture of Prayer and Sacramental Life

We will grow a school culture where adoration, the Rosary, confession, and other practices of the faith are embedded in the school day and accessible to all — students, families, and faculty.



Facilities & Campus Improvements

Safe, well-maintained physical spaces are essential to supporting student learning and community life. Our focus in this area includes building maintenance, classroom improvements, technology, outdoor spaces, and accessibility, which shapes our facilities master plan and capital improvement decisions for the years ahead.

Facilities & Campus Improvements

Our Strategic Vision

St. Patrick's campus is safe, functional, and welcoming. Our instructional and extracurricular space needs are met through thoughtful expansion and creative community partnerships. Our gym, technology, and traffic systems reflect modern standards. Students enjoy a pleasant daily experience, and the school has a funded, proactive plan for ongoing campus care.

Our Goals

➤ Goal 1: Expand and Optimize Campus Space

We will address our current shortage of instructional and extracurricular space through a combination of creative use of existing facilities, community partnerships, and a formal expansion plan. We will establish routines for examining campus needs and maintain a dedicated building reserve fund to support ongoing improvement.

➤ Goal 2: Ensure a Safe and Well-Maintained Environment

We will tackle near-term safety priorities — including traffic, campus security, and shared resources — and build sustainable, proactive systems so that safety is never reactive or underfunded.

➤ Goal 3: Build a Sustainable Technology Program

We will move toward a well-managed device program for students, supported by a rolling three-year replacement cycle and reliable on-site or contracted IT support. Teachers will have streamlined processes for replacement and repairs funded through the annual fund and a consistent budget line.



Financial Planning & Affordability

Keeping Catholic education accessible to families while maintaining long-term financial health is a core priority for St. Patrick's. This area encompasses tuition, fundraising, budget allocation, and long-term financial planning, balancing fiscal responsibility with our mission to welcome families from diverse economic backgrounds.

Financial Planning & Affordability

Our Strategic Vision

St. Patrick's is financially sustainable and accessible. Teacher salaries are competitive with peer schools, funded through a combination of thoughtful tuition increases and diversified revenue sources. A growing base of alumni and former-family donors supplements Annual Fund contributions from current families. Financial aid structures make the school a possibility for families who are called to be here.

Our Goals

- **Goal 1: Achieve Competitive Teacher Compensation Without Overburdening Families**
We will develop a transparent, sustainable plan to ensure teacher salaries stay in line with or above peer Catholic schools, funded through a strategic combination of modest, predictable tuition increases, Annual Fund contributions, and revenue sources outside of tuition. The school community will be a partner in understanding and supporting this path.
- **Goal 2: Build a Broader, More Diversified Base of Financial Support**
We will actively cultivate giving from alumni and former school families — people who benefited from St. Patrick's and can help ensure the next generation does, too. Dedicated outreach, communication, and relationship-building will make this a meaningful revenue stream.
- **Goal 3: Strengthen Financial Accessibility for Families**
We will continuously evaluate our financial aid structures and capacity to ensure financial aid is meaningful and accessible for all families who need it.



Recruitment & Retention

A thriving school community depends on attracting mission-aligned families and talented teachers, and giving them every reason to stay. Our work here centers on recruitment strategies, retention conditions, family engagement, and the alumni and extracurricular connections that keep our community strong across generations.

Recruitment & Retention

Our Strategic Vision

St. Patrick's attracts and retains exceptional teachers and families who are deeply connected to our mission. Our communications are clear and empowering. Family participation is strong from day one. Alumni stay connected and give back. Extracurricular offerings are robust, well-attended, and communicated far enough in advance for families to plan. Our school reflects the diversity of the community it serves, united by a shared Catholic identity.

Our Goals

➤ Goal 1: Tell Our Story Clearly and Year-Round

We will build a consistent communications strategy that helps current and prospective families understand the value of a St. Patrick's education.

➤ Goal 2: Recruit and Retain Excellent Teachers

We will develop a proactive teacher recruitment infrastructure, in partnership with school administration, that ensures we are actively cultivating a pipeline of mission-aligned educators. Retention will be supported through competitive compensation (in coordination with our financial strategy), community investment, and a clear sense of belonging and purpose.

➤ Goal 3: Strengthen Alumni Engagement

We will build lasting connections with graduates and former families so that alumni remain active, invested members of the St. Patrick's community long after they leave.

➤ Goal 4: Grow and Sustain Extracurricular Offerings

We will expand and strengthen our extracurricular and Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sports programs based on data and community interest. Families will know what is available and how to plan for it — and over time, our offerings will reflect the breadth of interests and talents across our school community.

➤ Goal 5: Welcome a Diverse, Mission-Aligned Community

We will hold ongoing conversations about how to grow the diversity of our school community in a way that honors our Catholic identity.



Culture & Climate

Every member of the St. Patrick's community deserves to feel welcomed, valued, and supported. Our work in this area centers on how relationships are built, how concerns are addressed, and how belonging is cultivated across students, staff, and families.

Culture & Climate

Our Strategic Vision

St. Patrick's is a community where families feel informed, welcomed, and genuinely connected from their very first year. Parent roles are clear, communication is reliable, volunteers are plentiful and well-supported, and our school's diverse backgrounds are a source of shared pride and belonging.

Our Goals

- **Goal 1: Deepen Family Engagement and Participation**
We will strengthen family engagement by clarifying the roles of the Home School Association and School Advisory Board — helping parents know where to direct their questions and energy — while expanding volunteer opportunities that are visible, varied, and welcoming to all families.
- **Goal 2: Enhance Our New Family Experience**
We will build a structured, warm onboarding experience that helps every new family feels connected, loved, and welcomed.
- **Goal 3: Strengthen Communication Channels**
We will streamline and clarify our communications channels. Families will know what to expect, what's expected of them, which channels to rely on, and how to stay informed.
- **Goal 4: Foster an Inclusive and Diverse Community**
We will actively celebrate the cultural diversity within our school community and ensure that families from all backgrounds feel represented, valued, and drawn to what St. Patrick's offers. Our Catholic identity will be the common ground that unites us across our differences.
- **Goal 5: Establish a Clear Framework for Family Partnership**
We will have established a clear, mutually agreed-upon framework for family partnership — including expectations around student conduct, communication, and community engagement — that is consistently communicated, equitably applied, and revisited annually with the school community.





Saint Patrick's School | 4101 Norbeck Road, Rockville, Maryland 20853
301-929-9672 | www.stpatrickadw.org