



thoughtexchange - results and insights

Strategic Plan - March, 2018



**Holy Spirit
Roman Catholic**
Separate Regional Division No. 4

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Introduction

In March of 2018, Holy Spirit Catholic Schools reached out to their community to start a conversation about authentically Catholic schools, strengthening Catholic identity, and ways to prepare students for a changing future. Participants shared their thoughts and rated the thoughts of others by placing stars next to the ideas that were most important to them. This report highlights participants' priorities and considers areas where the thoughts expressed could inform division decision-making.

Exchange Overview

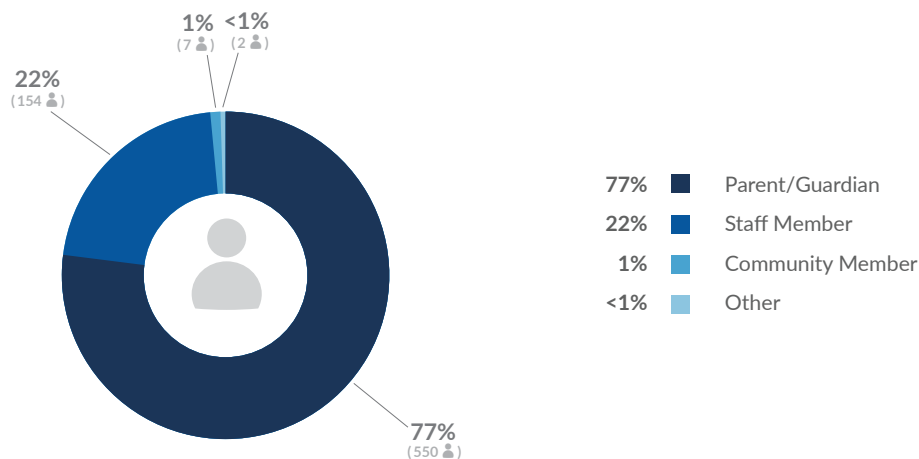
Participation

 812  1,276  9,436

Questions

- Q1** What aspects of our school life best demonstrate that we are authentically Catholic schools?
- Q2** What are some ways our division and schools can strengthen our Catholic identity?
- Q3** What are some ways we might better prepare our students for a changing future?

Demographics



Insights Overview

Thoughts shared by participants were grouped into themes and an analysis was conducted on the participants' starring patterns. The analysis, which highlights participants' priorities and areas of interest, is presented in the following sections:

- / Authentically Catholic Schools
- / Strengthening Catholic Identity
- / Preparing Students



Authentically Catholic Schools

Prayer

- This is the largest conversation in Q1 across all three exchanges. It grew in size in the 2018 exchange.
- Aligns with the division goal of **Faith Focus**.
- Participants emphasized the important role of daily prayer in supporting and reinforcing the authenticity of Catholicism in division schools.
- Many thoughts expressed appreciation that students are able to pray together in the morning.

Prayer encourages a personal relationship with Jesus, and sharing in the liturgical year shows that relationship is meant to be shared with others. My kids often show me colouring pages of Bible stories from school, which facilitates discussion at home about what they've learned.

4.5 ★ 12 👤

Mass and Liturgical Celebrations

- This is a large conversation in Q1 across the 2016, 2017 and 2018 exchanges.
- Aligns with the division goal of **Faith Focus**.
- Participants expressed gratitude for students being able to celebrate Mass and participate in religious celebrations at school.

Important Masses held throughout the year right in the school. Prayer every day and displays throughout the school. Makes us a stronger community within the school.

4.4 ★ 19 👤

Religious Education

- This is a large conversation in Q1 in the 2018 exchange, and a top conversation in the 2016 and 2017 exchanges.
- Aligns with the division goal of **Faith Focus**.
- Participants emphasized their interest in continuing to see religious education integrated into the curriculum across courses and programs.

Continuously emphasizing the importance of students' spiritual life in following Jesus and the Bible, at the same time delivering high-quality education. To raise a future generation that can be accountable, credible and solid principles, spiritually and personally. So they would serve their community.

4.4 ★ 19 👤

Religious Activities

- This is a midsize conversation in the 2018 exchange, and has steadily grown from the 2016 exchange.
- Aligns with the division goal of **Faith Focus**.
- Participants discussed the importance of celebrating religious holidays, such as Christmas, and embracing activities such as youth groups and prayer corners.

The occurrence of activities such as Masses/religious services and visits from parish priests to the school. It is important for students to see activities and their priest outside church to understand this is part of their full life, not just on Sundays.

4.4 ★ 12 👤

School Community and Environment

- This is a midsize conversation in Q1 in the 2018 exchange. It has declined significantly from the 2016 and 2017 exchanges.
- Participants expressed appreciation for the warm, welcoming environment and community feeling at division schools.

With the way my child/ren have been made to feel comfortable in the school environment. All children are equal no matter skin colour or culture they come from. God does not discriminate and neither should we/environment and all.

4.8 ★ 16 👤



Strengthening Catholic Identity

Partnership with Religious Leaders and Church

- This is a large conversation in Q2, which grew in size in the 2018 exchange.
- Participants emphasized the importance of continuing to foster relationships between the parish, schools and families.
- Some participants added that clergy could be further included in school activities and classroom learning.

Continue to foster the relationship between parish, school and parent community.

Important to develop and enhance the connection between the parish and our school community through increased opportunities for relationship building.

4.1 ★ 15 👤

Teachers and Staff

- This is a large conversation in Q2 across all three exchanges. It grew slightly in the 2018 exchange.
- Participants emphasized the importance of teachers and staff modelling the Catholic faith for students.
- They added that teachers as mentors could be achieved by:
 - Hiring and retaining practicing Catholics
 - Offering faith formation opportunities to staff
 - Encouraging teachers and staff to attend Mass

By recruiting and retaining staff who're actively practicing the Catholic faith, we can be sure the faith is shared every day with students.

The power of example is so strong and children learn virtues and character when surrounded by people boldly practicing the Catholic faith.

4.1 ★ 14 👤

Promote Catholic Values

- This is a large conversation in Q2, which grew significantly from the 2016 and 2017 exchanges.
- Participants discussed the need to embrace and propagate the Catholic identity, as well as advocate for Catholic education.

Incorporate Catholic values into our everyday lessons. If teachers can do this as much as possible, it will help our Catholic values permeate throughout our student body.

4.6 ★ 5 👤

Volunteering and Social Justice Work

- This is a large conversation in Q2. It was much larger in the 2017 exchange (the largest conversation in Q2).
- Participants would like to see students engaging in volunteer work in the community where they are able to experience giving, helping and caring for those in need.

Have more meaningful/real-life social justice projects - taking kids to food banks or volunteering at local not-for-profit organizations. Students need to SEE what a positive impact they can have in their community.

4.3 ★ 20 👤



Preparing Students

Experiential and Vocational Learning

- This is the largest conversation in Q3, and a top conversation in the 2016 and 2017 exchanges. It grew in size in the 2018 exchange.
- Discussion centred around students developing life skills and financial literacy. Some participants added that practical and vocational learning opportunities are needed to prepare students for success.

Emphasize the importance of real-life skills. Focus on developing skills students will need for life beyond the classroom - critical thinking, problem-solving, working with others, compassion.

4.5 ★ 15 👤

Academic Education and Skill Development

- This is a large conversation in Q3, which grew in size from the 2016 and 2017 exchanges.
- Participants expressed interest in students developing a range of soft skills and a love of learning. They also discussed an expectation of excellence and the importance of resilience.

Encourage resiliency. Students need to learn to cope with consequences and be accountable for their actions.

4.5 ★ 13 👤

Instruction

- This is a midsize conversation in Q3, which has grown steadily from the 2016 and 2017 exchanges.
- Participants discussed various ways of strengthening instruction, including:
 - Differentiating instruction
 - Encouraging creative instructional practices
 - Supporting student-led initiatives and leadership

By adapting and changing our classes based on the students within them. We must keep our methodologies current and applicable for our students. Students need real-life application of the curriculum. We must teach our students to think critically and not just memorize facts.

4.1 ★ 13 👤

Learn More

Full results for Holy Spirit Catholic Schools can be found here:

Results Website: holyspirit.thoughtexchange.info

The Thoughtexchange Process

Thoughtexchange provides software solutions that bring people together, build trust and make progress on important topics. People can confidentially and independently share their thoughts, appreciate other points of view and understand how their perspectives are connected to decisions.

A simple process ensures everyone is heard, everyone learns and important ideas emerge. The diagram on the right shows the three steps of the Thoughtexchange process.



Share answers to open ended questions



Add stars to thoughts shared by others



Discover what is important to the group