Catholic Schools
Identity Assessment

Helping Catholic high schools create an environment in which Catholic culture thrives by permeating every aspect of the school’s life.
“From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith, and having its own unique characteristics. The Council summed this up by speaking of an environment permeated with the gospel spirit of love and freedom.”

- Education in a Catholic School, 25

The Catholic School Identity Assessment (CSIA) is an innovative program sponsored by the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) to help a Catholic high school assess its Catholic identity. A school can choose from three levels of evaluation, depending on the depth of analysis it desires.

The goal is to provide the Catholic school a means for 1) self-reflection by its administration, faculty and staff on how each of them works to support the Catholic identity of the school, and 2) providing the school with feedback from an independent third-party using a standard, objective set of criteria.

Because these standards are uniform and objective, the school can measure its progress longitudinally, to chart over the course of years how well it is adhering to its primary mission. As part of each assessment, CEF staff will offer the school a set of conceptual and concrete recommendations that can be reassessed on a regular basis.

In essence, the CSIA is designed to help Catholic schools create an environment in which Catholic culture not only thrives but permeates every aspect of the school’s life. The CSIA can help Catholic schools form a concrete plan of action for creating this environment, to give glory to God and help its students love God above all things and their neighbors as themselves.
WHAT IS THE CSIA?
• A tool to help Catholic schools comprehensively evaluate and assess their Catholic identity
• Administered for each school by the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF)

WHY IS THIS INSTRUMENT IMPORTANT?
• The Church’s primary mandate is to evangelize
• Catholic schools are an indispensable part of fulfilling this mandate
• The CSIA helps Catholic schools ensure that they are faithful to their vocation to evangelize

HOW DOES THIS PROGRAM WORK?
• A Catholic school requests an assessment from the CEF
• The school administers the CSIA questionnaires to all employees (CEF staff may conduct supplemental interviews and school visitations to supplement the results of the questionnaires, upon request)
• The CEF collates and analyzes all responses and issues a report with recommendations
• Follow-up is available from CEF staff, including in-service programs to help schools understand and implement the report’s recommendations

WHY IS THE CSIA DIFFERENT?
• The CSIA provides a school with third-party analysis, increasing objectivity
• Because the report is independent, it can be used as part of a school’s marketing program
• The CSIA’s narrative format allows for nuances and detail not available in a purely objective format
• The CSIA is comprehensive, covering every aspect of a school’s philosophy and life
• A school may use the instrument over and over again, providing the school with a longitudinal option for comparison over time
• The CEF offers extensive support and follow-up with its staff of trained and experienced Catholic school educators
WHAT ARE TODAY’S TOP LEADERS IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION SAYING ABOUT THE CSIA?

“One of our most crucial tasks is to promote the Catholic identity of our schools. The Catholic Education Foundation has produced a most valuable assessment tool that affords us the opportunity to have an accurate diagnostic instrument for which every Catholic educator should be grateful.”
-Sean Cardinal O’Malley, OFM Cap, Archbishop of Boston

“The Catholic School Identity Assessment provides a framework for assessing and improving the many and varied expressions of this purpose, focusing on the Catholic school’s primary function of apostolate. Thus the Catholic Education Initiative is a wonderful tool for administrators, school boards, and pastors who want to help their school communities understand the true mission of Catholic Education, and how well their school is accomplishing that mission.”
-Ralph Johnston, Headmaster, The Atonement Academy, San Antonio, TX

“St. Mary’s High School is excited about the opportunity to use the Catholic School Identity Assessment as we continue to grow in our mission in service of Catholic Education in Colorado Springs. We believe this tool will help us focus our efforts in authentically forming our young men and women in mind, body and spirit in a way that is wholly consistent with our Catholic Faith. This process will allow us to build on our strengths and identify those areas where God is calling us to grow.”
-Deacon Dave Camous, President, St. Mary’s High School, Colorado Springs, CO.

“I have used the Catholic Education Foundation assessment tool with a group of administrators and teachers to whom I was giving a retreat. All of us found it extremely insightful and very helpful. I wholeheartedly recommend it as a means of promoting a clear Catholic identity.”
-The Most Reverend George Murry, SJ, Bishop of Youngstown

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