

MISSION EFFECTIVENESS  
FOR THE SCHOOLS OF THE  
CRISTO REY NETWORK

Standards  
and  
Assessment Process

Revised September 10, 2008

## **CRISTO REY NETWORK OF SCHOOLS VISION, MISSION, AND MEANS STATEMENT**

### **Vision**

All students have equal access to the educational opportunities they need to be successful in college and contribute with their gifts to the arrival of the Kingdom of God.

### **Mission**

The Cristo Rey Network prepares young people with limited options for college.

### **Means**

The Cristo Rey Network achieves its mission through:

- Supporting member schools that provide...
  - rigorous Catholic secondary education,
  - a real world Work Study Program,
  - learning in a context of faith;
- Assuring the quality of those schools by...
  - fostering the sharing of best practices,
  - coordinating a Mission Effectiveness Program,
  - offering professional development & training,
  - seeking funding and resources,
  - promoting ongoing spiritual formation, and
  - supporting graduates of Cristo Rey schools while they are in college;
- Working with community groups in targeted cities to create more Cristo Rey schools.

**A Cristo Rey model school shall meet the following standards. The school:**

1. Is explicitly Catholic in mission and enjoys Church approval.
2. Serves only economically disadvantaged students. The school is open to students of various faiths and cultures, and is culturally sensitive and community-based.
3. Is family centered and plays an active role in the local community.
4. Is accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association. It has a college preparatory curriculum designed for a high level of student engagement in their learning.
5. Requires participation by all students in the work-study program. All students must be 14 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> or the first official day of work, whichever comes later.
6. Seeks to integrate the learning present in its work program, classroom and extracurricular experiences for the fullest benefit of its student workers.
7. Has an effective administrative structure—normally including positions such as a separate President, Principal, CWSP Director, and Development Director—and a Board structure that includes religious, education, community, business and civic leaders; complies with all applicable state and federal laws, including immigration, labor and not-for-profit tax laws.
8. Is financially sound. At full enrollment, the school is primarily dependent on revenue from the work-study program to meet operating expenses. In addition, the school maintains a comprehensive advancement program to ensure financial stability.
9. Seeks to understand, assure, and improve how and how well its students learn and grow.
10. Is an active participant in the collaboration, support, and development of the Cristo Rey Network.

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Each School is different. The assessment process serves as a way for the Network to evaluate the progress of each school concerning these Standards as well as a means for Network schools to share expertise and learn from one another. This process must take into account that each school differs from the others and may have alternate ways of addressing these Standards. Also,

schools typically participate in the activities of accrediting agencies and are reviewed by sponsoring religious congregations and dioceses. Assessment of these standards is meant to complement this ongoing work on the part of the school rather than duplicate it.

## **Standard One**

A Cristo Rey school is explicitly Catholic in mission and enjoys Church approval.

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1. The school meets the requirements of its religious sponsoring body in areas such as religious identity and mission; community atmosphere; faculty, staff, and board formation; and programs of religious education, worship, retreats, and community service.
2. The school seeks to incorporate the cultural traditions and customs of the student body into the celebration of faith.
3. The school relates collegially with surrounding Catholic high schools, parishes, and grade schools.
4. The school has in place personnel, processes, and programs such that the school is religiously vibrant, marked by its faith-identity in the various aspects of the school's life.

## Standard Two

A Cristo Rey school serves only economically disadvantaged students. The school is open to students of various faiths and cultures, and is culturally sensitive and community-based.

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1. All accepted applicants to a Cristo Rey school must complete a third-party financial aid process approved by the Network that incorporates their most recently filed tax records, family demographics (e.g., family size) and other relevant financial information. The school annually shares the student income information from the third-party financial aid service with the Network.
2. Through its admissions process, the school continually renews its commitment to the marginalized by aggressively seeking students from economically disadvantaged families and neighborhoods. Specifically, schools recruit students who are eligible for the federal free/reduced lunch program. As a result, each school maintains an admissions policy that considers student income levels and meets one of the following measures for all incoming students:
  - a. *the per capita Adjusted Available Family Income for an individual student's family (as determined by a Network-approved third-party financial aid service) shall not exceed 75% of the per capita Median Household Income (as indicated by the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent American Community Survey) of the city in which the school is located or for the nation, whichever is higher;*  
*or*
  - b. *the total Adjusted Available Family Income for an individual student's family (as determined by a Network-approved third-party financial aid service) shall not exceed 75% of the Median Household Income (as indicated by the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent American Community Survey) of the city in which the school is located or for the nation, whichever is higher.*
3. The school orients its programs, curricula and family outreach in a manner that is sensitive to the income levels of the students and families it serves. (See Standard Three, item 7)
4. The school celebrates the unique cultures and histories of the student body. (See Standard One, item 2; see also Standard Three)
5. Beyond the assistance provided by the work-study program, the school provides financial aid to families who cannot afford the full tuition, while maintaining a policy that every student must pay something.

6. The school makes a determined effort to fill administrative and faculty positions with qualified people that reflect the make-up the student population (e.g., color and language).
  
7. The school recognizes that the income levels of the student population in its immediate geographic area may change. As a result, the school will broaden its reach and actively seek economically disadvantaged students throughout the city and region it serves.

### **Standard Three**

A Cristo Rey school is family centered and plays an active role in the local community.

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The school implements a program of communication with parents to help them understand the school's mission, approaches, benefits, and challenges, and to bring parents into the process of their student's learning and growth. This program will include the following:

1. The school provides outreach to parents and family members through liturgical services, retreats, prayer groups and other faith activities as well as counseling and health care referral.
2. The school interviews parents/guardians as part of the school admissions process to orient them to the school's realities and to assess their support for the school's mission, the overall academic demands, and the work-study program.
3. The school recruits staff members who are sensitive to the culture(s) of the families the school serves.
4. To the extent possible, communications materials are drafted in the native language of the school's parents as well as in English.
5. Regular grade report meetings are scheduled with parents and teachers to discuss their child's progress in the school.
6. Parent understanding and support of the work-study program and the total academic program is expected and, therefore, orientation and information sessions on these programs are provided to parents.
7. Through its outreach, the school establishes itself as an active participant in the improvement of the surrounding community and shares programs, resources, and facilities.
8. The school works to establish an atmosphere in which families feel respected, both in how the school addresses parent concerns and also in how the school learns from and responds to parent requests and suggestions.
9. The school identifies with community and neighborhood groups that defend the economically marginalized and works closely with them.

## **Standard Four**

A Cristo Rey school is accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association. It has a college preparatory curriculum designed for a high level of student engagement in their learning.

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1. The school maintains accreditation by a recognized accrediting association.
2. Graduation requirements fit appropriately with college admissions standards.
3. The school enrollment, while large enough to be financially feasible, is at the same time kept small enough to create an optimum atmosphere for student growth and learning.
4. Students are selected and retained based on their academic and social potential, with a realization that the school is unable to serve students who display significant limitations in these areas.
5. The faculty is committed to continued discussions and dialog to develop curricula and methodologies that both challenge and support students and respond to their unique needs.
6. Faculty pay particular attention to student learning styles.
7. The school has a program to support students who are transitioning to a culture of learning.

## **Standard Five**

A Cristo Rey school requires participation by all students in the work-study program. All students must be 14 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> or the first official day of work, whichever comes later.

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1. No student shall be employed by the work-study program unless he or she is 14 years or older.
2. The directors of the work-study program conduct the program as a business and are subsequently attentive to the needs and expectations of the school's corporate clients.
3. Expectations for students are rigorous and there are performance evaluation measures in place to assure this. Students are to be treated at the work place like any other entry-level employee.
4. The school properly trains students for the work-study program and provides sufficient guidance and assessment throughout the school year.
5. The school provides transportation for students to and from the work sites.
6. Students are fined for missing work, regardless of the excuse.
7. A dress code appropriate for the corporate community is consistently enforced at school and work.
8. A yearly fee for the students' appropriate to the going market rate for a full-time salary and benefits is charged to corporate sponsors, representing a business expense, not a charitable contribution to the school.
9. The work-study program is a separately constituted corporation well integrated into the school.
10. Directors/coordinators of the work-study program are trained at existing Network schools and contribute regularly to the ongoing dialog among work-study directors throughout the country.
11. Students receive academic credit for the program, as arranged with the local accrediting agency.

12. Site supervisors and school staff evaluate students' performance in the work program using a common Cristo Rey Network form, at least twice a year.
13. The school contracts with non-profit employers in order to serve the local community and to provide students with exposure to the non-profit world; funds are raised from outside sources to finance these positions. These positions should not exceed 10 percent of the school's total job base when the school is at full capacity.
14. The work-study program employs staff with business experience and expertise, a strong sense of the unique Cristo Rey mission, a capacity and desire to work with young people.
15. Ongoing evaluation of the work program by the staff, school administration and governing body takes place each year at the school. Sponsor feedback is part of this evaluation.
16. The work-study program administration has the authority to deem a student unemployable, in effect commencing a process by which the student will leave the school.

## **Standard Six**

A Cristo Rey school seeks to integrate the learning present in its work program, classroom and extracurricular experiences for the fullest benefit of its student workers.

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1. The faculty and staff recognize the work program and its job sponsors as human endeavors where there are opportunities to find God and to deepen their own and student relationships with God. The faculty and staff recognize the inherent dignity of work and seek to find specific ways to maximize the potential goodness of the experience within their roles at the school.
2. The school recognizes that its work and academic programs are interdependent and interconnected. At the school's very foundation is the conviction that work and academics enhance one another for the benefit of the students, the sponsors, the teachers and the community.
3. Through its hiring practices, the school specifically seeks persons with positive attitudes about the work program and its integration with academics. Performance evaluations reinforce that each person takes some responsibility for the success of students in the work program.
4. The school allocates time for discussion of ways for integration of work and academics at all levels of the organization: the board, leadership team, faculty/staff and students.
5. Students are provided with an opportunity to reflect on their corporate experience.
6. In order to facilitate integration, teachers have opportunities to understand all aspects of the work-study program.
7. The school seeks opportunities in classroom and extracurricular activities that will help improve students' skills and work ethic so that the students continue to bring added value to the workplace.
8. The school makes certain that all employees understand they have a stake in the success of the work program. All strategies and programs related to integration respect the sensitivities of the work situation. The school assumes the added workload and effort necessary to integration.

## Standard Seven

A Cristo Rey school has an effective administrative structure—normally including positions such as a separate President, Principal, CIP Director, and Development Director—and a board structure that includes religious, education, community, business and civic leaders; the school complies with all applicable state and federal laws, including immigration, labor and not-for-profit tax laws.

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1. A Cristo Rey school, while always following the requirements of its religious sponsor, has elements of independent governance that promote Board members taking an active role in the school's success.
2. There is a program of regular board formation, which may be offered by a religious congregation, local diocese, or some other appropriate source.
3. The head of school, generally the President, is accountable to the governing Board; the governing Board evaluates the performance of the head of school each year.
4. A Cristo Rey school benchmarks itself against other Network schools, paying particular attention to schools with similar enrollments, demographics, and years of operation.
5. The school's Board includes business, civic, and educational leaders, is appropriately trained, understands its responsibilities and role in the school, and supports and understands the school's mission and programs.
6. The governing body performs a regular self-evaluation.
7. The appropriate supervisors perform evaluations and review processes of all school personnel yearly.
8. The school's internal accounting system is appropriately managed, and the school and work-study program undergo an independent audit each year.
9. The school complies with all applicable state and federal laws, including immigration, labor and not-for-profit tax laws.
10. The school is staffed appropriately to ensure the effective education and formation of the student body.
11. The school designs and implements a compensation structure that is supportive of quality performance.

## **Standard Eight**

A Cristo Rey school is financially sound. At full enrollment the school is primarily dependent on revenue from the work-study program to meet operating expenses. In addition, the school maintains a comprehensive advancement program to ensure financial stability.

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1. A Cristo Rey school is not tuition driven, is a model of economic efficiency, and consciously strives to maximize its use of limited financial resources.
2. At full enrollment, a Cristo Rey school is a small community of learners, ranging in size from 300 to 600 students.
3. At full enrollment, income from the work-study program ideally should cover at least 60% of operating expenses. Every school's work-study to operating expenses ratio shall be compared to the Network average, and no school should have a ratio ten percentage points below the Network average.
4. At full enrollment, income from family contributions to tuition should cover approximately 10% of operating expenses.
5. The school raises money for capital improvements, non-paying non-profit jobs, tuition assistance, and program needs.
6. The school takes steps in marketing and outreach to ensure a sufficient enrollment that maintains financial stability.
7. The school develops a multi-year budget model to anticipate future needs and trends.
8. The school implements a program to provide facilities appropriate for its mission.
9. The school develops materials such as newsletters, brochures, a web site and other communication approaches that effectively tell the school's story and promote the raising of funds from the larger community.
10. The school embarks as quickly as feasible on a campaign to establish an endowment in order to ensure the school's long-term financial stability and to guard against the impact of a national or regional economic downturn.

## **Standard Nine**

A Cristo Rey school seeks to understand, assure, and improve how and how well its students learn and grow.

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1. Standardized tests and other appropriate assessments are used to track and document student performance.
2. The school maintains contact with alumni through their completion of college, maintains and compiles data on their progress, and seeks their assessment and suggestions to strengthen the school's program.
3. The school participates in Network-assisted program assessment.
4. The school uses the learning outcomes model developed by the Network, captures its standardized indicators and shares these with the Network.
5. The school tracks its alumni/ae, including monitoring their progress through college. The school surveys their opinions on how well the school prepared them for college, tracks transfers between colleges, and maintains a record of college graduation rates for its alumni/ae.

## **Standard Ten**

A Cristo Rey school is an active participant in the collaboration, support, and development of the Cristo Rey Network.

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1. The school is founded in view of a determination of the feasibility of the school in terms of interest, support and need in a local community.
2. Network Board, representing the other member schools, admits the school to the Cristo Rey Network.
3. The school participates in the various conferences and gatherings of the Cristo Rey Network.
4. The school seeks to share its learning and expertise with other Network schools.
5. The school participates in the Network support and assessment process.