



Frequently Asked Questions

Is the plan already decided? What are its guidelines?

No. The planning process will be long and extensive involving all pastors, school principals and lay leaders from parish and school councils in the study area. No recommendations have been formulated. Plan recommendations will be formed after a series of parish and school listening and question sessions and after further study by lay leaders and pastoral review.

Why is the study area only east of 72nd street?

The factors initially limiting the study to the metro urban area include: a disproportionate number of parish and school buildings are located in the area, and the population is no longer growing or is moving away. These population shifts and the reduced economic resources they bring have placed a burden on several parishes and schools in the study area. Other factors include a diminishing number of available priests and the challenges of providing new lay leaders to supplement the pastor's duties. Added up, the study area has many changes occurring and adapting to these changing conditions so that the message of Christ may be more effectively carried out is a key objective of the study.

Who is involved in the meetings and the decision making process?

Pastors, school principals and lay leaders from parish and school councils from the designated study area are the primary participants. In addition, two steering committees - parish and school - will be formed to review in detail the feedback from listening sessions, demographic and city planning information and financial and population data trends along with input from the consultants regarding parish/school national trends.

Will my voice be heard?

Parish and school lay leaders, identified by their pastor, are invited to several meetings throughout the study process. At these meetings the consultants will offer ideas about alternative parish and school organization models and invite discussion and questions. These sessions will be shared with parish and school boards and councils for additional discussion. Council and board members and parishioners are invited to contact their pastor or designated lay leaders to offer their concerns or ideas.



ARCHDIOCESE of OMAHA

*Parish & School Study:
Jesus, Light our Way*

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How will decisions be made regarding final recommendations?

There are several principles which are considered essential to ensure the process aligns with the mission of the Church:

- Sacramental ministry must be available to every Catholic in the study area.
- Parishes in the study area must have qualified pastoral leaders, which mean competent and compassionate clergy, religious and lay leaders.
- The continued support of our Catholic schools is very important for our future as a Church and for the community where they are located; their availability and sustainability is a vital concern of the study.
- Special concern must be given to the poor, the marginalized and the immigrant.

Will affected parishes and schools have an opportunity to review a decision about their parish or school?

In order to respond to the needs of parishioners that may be affected by a parish or school merger or a new organization model, a process for discernment and reflection on the decision will be communicated. More information about such a process will be forthcoming.