

PRESENTATION B.V.M. SCHOOL
CHELTENHAM, PENNSYLVANIA

PRESENTATION B.V.M. SCHOOL
CULTIVATES A CARING COMMUNITY:
CREATING A "NO BULLYING" ZONE

RE-ACCREDITATION PROJECT EVALUATION PROPOSAL
FOR
MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

DECEMBER 2004

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Section I – Description of the School and Project Planning Process

Philosophy

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary School community helps students to understand, accept, and live the Gospel message found in the teachings of Jesus and the Catholic Church. The faculty and parents proclaim, teach, and witness that Jesus is our Savior. This example and commitment encourages students to develop a relationship with God based on love and respect. As they grow, the students realize that God loves and values them as creatures made in His image and likeness. As they mature, this realization radiates to and affects other members of their communities.

Presentation B.V.M. School's faith community nourishes this relationship. Our shared beliefs, values, experiences, and goals offer the students support and encouragement. Belief in each other's worth and uniqueness fosters mutual love, care, and concern. Shared moral values enrich our dealings with one another. Communal and personal prayer strengthens our bond with God and members of our community. All of these experiences reinforce the Gospel message and encourage students to serve others.

From their beginning days at Presentation B.V.M. School, the children are made aware of the needs of others. They are provided with opportunities to put Jesus' message of service into action through parish and community activities. They become involved participants in the Church's mission and thus reflect the school's religious nature.

Acknowledging that the religious formation of our children is a priority, Presentation B.V.M. School also offers them the opportunity to develop their academic potential. The curriculum embodies a balanced and traditional program of intellectual,

personal, social, and physical activities that recognize the needs of the children. Special attention is directed to the acquisition of basic skills; the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and creative writing skills is emphasized and underscored in all facets of learning.

Teachers stimulate the development of the students' God-given intelligence through the presentation of an organized course of study. Adherence to the Archdiocesan Curriculum allows the students to acquire the knowledge necessary to advance through the prescribed subject matter. The presentation of concrete experiences in the primary grades flows gradually into more abstract experiences in the intermediate and upper grades. The faculty uses a variety of teaching styles and materials to meet the intellectual and personal needs of the students to succeed. This then fosters a positive self-image which supports the growth of the student's personal nature.

The goal for the development of the students' personal nature is to provide them with life skills grounded in their Catholic faith. This is an ongoing process which begins in their homes and is nurtured and developed in the school community. The joint efforts of parents and teachers inspire the students to grow toward self-respect, self-expression, self-reliance, and an awareness of personal responsibility. The social progress of the child is dependent upon the acquisition of these skills and the recognition of the value of others.

The school provides ample experiences for the development of the students' Christian social nature. Mutual respect, honesty and openness are fostered through classroom and school rules. In their daily interactions with peers and adults, the students are expected to treat others with courtesy and respect. The faculty and staff assist

students in their efforts to become active and productive members of their community and society by both their guidance and example.

The growth of the physical nature of the student is reinforced through the religion, science, and physical education programs. These programs foster a respect for the gift of life and a belief that this gift comes from God. Opportunities are provided for the development of self-discipline, sportsmanship, and a healthy attitude toward physical well-being.

The parents and faculty develop the spiritual nature of the students by providing instruction, examples of Christian faith in action, and opportunities to live their faith. Students participate in the sacramental life of the Church, religious celebrations, and prayer experiences. These encourage the students to become more deeply involved in their community of faith.

Present Status of the School

Presentation B.V.M. School serves students from Philadelphia and Montgomery counties. Presently there are 437 students enrolled in grades kindergarten through eight. The average class size is between twenty-five to thirty students with two classes of each grade. The students reflect all ability levels within the normal range. Enrollment over the last ten years (1994-2004) has decreased from a high of approximately 500 to our current enrollment of 437 students; last year we welcomed many students from our closing sister parish, Saint Joseph, Cheltenham. The majority of the children in the school community are from middle-class socioeconomic backgrounds, while 8% are lower income.

Tuition, our main source of funding, has increased steadily over the last six years. The present rates reflect a difference for parish and non-parish members. Other sources of income include: parish contributions (26% of the operating expenses), grants, donations, and fundraising efforts of the Home and School Association.

The pastor, Rev. William Harrison and the principal, Mrs. Nancy Scharnikow, lead the school administration. The faculty includes a dedicated staff of twenty full-time and three part-time teachers and one aide.

Kindergarten	Mrs. Marguerite Schmidt and Mrs. Maryanne Culbertson, aide
First Grade	Mrs. Mary Ann Bonner (2003-2004), Miss Kate Iacobellis, and Mrs. Joan Schroeder
Second Grade	Mrs. Judy Anderson, Miss Joyce McQuoid, Miss Megan Casey (2003-2005), Mrs. Kay Carrigan (2005)
Third Grade	Mrs. Mary Ellen Dowling and Mrs. Catherine Burgoyne
Fourth Grade	Mrs. Anne Swoyer and Mrs. Maureen Reilly
Fifth Grade	Mrs. Katharine Carrigan (2004-2005) and Mrs. Catherine

	Robinson
Sixth Grade	Miss Catherine McHugh and Mrs. Helene Long
Seventh Grade	Mrs. Anne Marie Barford and Mrs. Eileen Adelizzi
Eighth Grade	Mrs. Bernadette Ruch and Mrs. Joan Williams
Honors Math	Mrs. Ann Marie Sielski
Technology	Mrs. Gertrude Rocks
Library	Mrs. Kathleen Palombaro
Music	Mrs. Lettie Switzer
Fine Arts	Mrs. Donna Kutz
Physical Education	Mrs. Colleen Graham
Secretary	Mrs. Rose Casey

Presentation B.V.M. School emphasizes the importance of responsibility, cooperation, service, and Christian leadership. These programs also promote positive peer relations and recognition of both academic and non-academic talents.

The school community recognizes technology as an educational tool of today. Our technology team, composed of parents and staff, meets regularly to implement our three-year development plan. Students receive computer instruction beginning at the kindergarten level. The computer teacher, along with the faculty, strives to incorporate technology into the curriculum during weekly scheduled time in the lab and throughout the daily curriculum. Each classroom is equipped with a computer center housing four systems and a printer for student use.

An Honors Math Program is offered to qualifying students in grades four to eight; it is an accelerated course that enables students to complete Algebra I by the end of eighth grade. The Fine Arts Program develops the talent and interest of each student in both art and music. A Modification Program individualizes the curriculum to those students whose special needs determine this adjustment to be beneficial and appropriate.

An active Home and School Organization lends our school continued support by organizing family-centered events and by providing guest speakers who focus on parent concerns in light of an ever-changing world. This organization also sponsors fundraising activities throughout the year to supplement miscellaneous expenses. Parents take an active role in their children's education by volunteering as classroom, library, and clerical aides. Our annual Art Fair is a showcase of parental involvement.

The Presentation B.V.M. Student Council helps to foster a sense of school spirit and commitment to serve others. Through letters to shut-ins, the Poor Man's Supper, Earth Day Activities, Dances, Movie Nights, and many other activities, students join together for fun and service. The students are also involved in co-curricular activities such as a religion bee, a geography bee, a science fair, social studies fair, various spelling bees, art contests, art fair, math competitions, various essay contests, and an academic Octathlon.

Primary

Children are given the opportunity to participate in liturgies, holiday celebrations, prayer partner activities, and various mission outreach programs. Elected mission representatives from each class help students to realize the needs of their community and the world at large. Extra-curricular activities include participation in the school Bowling League, Cub Scouts, Brownies, and Movie Nights.

Intermediate

At this level students are offered the opportunity to participate more fully in the liturgy as members of the liturgy ministry. Their service to the school also increases as they are elected to Student Council as classroom representatives. Students also have the opportunity to serve as student Technology Team members.

Beginning in fourth grade, students are offered the opportunity to receive instruction in musical instruments and participate in the school band. The students prepare several concert programs during the year. Advanced students are invited to audition for the annual Honor Band. A school choral group has been formed to develop musical talents. Students also audition for the Archdiocesan Choral Festival. An active C.Y.O. program fosters activities that contribute to each child's spiritual, physical, and social growth.

Beginning at this level the student may join a popular club, Pres Kids Care. This club offers services to the elderly and others in the community. Their commitment to serve others is evident in its after-school tutoring program. Pres Press, a student newspaper, is published each trimester.

Junior High

In addition to participating in liturgical celebrations as altar servers and lectors, students in grades seven and eight take on special roles in the annual Christmas Pageant and Lenten Living Stations. Prayer partner activities provide a time for sharing with younger children.

To fulfill their commitment to serve others, students serve as Student Council officers and representatives, safeties, and lunch aides. The planning and preparing of the school yearbook is a special eighth grade extracurricular activity.

Description of the Process

Today's climate of heightened attention to youth and school violence impels us to recognize the importance of early intervention. In light of this concern for the well-being and safety of all children, our desire is to make Presentation B.V.M. School a haven for our students. Because we wanted to create the kind of environment where each student would realize a deep sense of security and caring, the faculty chose to examine bullying as a possible Middle States project topic. The decision to commit to the Olweus Bullying Program was not made in haste, but after purposeful reflection upon the merits of such an undertaking.

At the faculty meeting in the spring of 2003 discussion of such an undertaking deduced that an informal survey of our student body must be distributed and then analyzed to ascertain whether or not an anti-bullying program was necessary at Presentation. The various grade-level teachers (K-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8) formulated specific age-appropriate questions that would address the topic. After serious consideration of the data, the conclusion was that our students had areas of concern in regard to bullying and that the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program so completely outlined an effective approach to the problem that we endorsed the proposal.

Consequently, our principal, Mrs. Nancy Scharnikow, scheduled two workshops at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit on November 10 and November 25, 2003, which were led by John McGranahan and Donna Carmean, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program trainers and certified school counselors. These two days were devoted to the education and training of faculty and staff in the vocabulary and technology of the concept of "bullying." Some topics analyzed were: What exactly is bullying? How can we recognize a bully? What can be done to prevent bullying? How can we empower

witnesses of bullying to act for the victim? How do we establish a bully-free, victimless environment? and so forth.

The interaction at these workshops also involved various techniques for eliciting reactions from the children, role playing, for example, and specifically emphasized how to run a classroom meeting whereby every child is heard and questions are posed which would evoke seemly, decent, germane reflections on bullying situations. Additionally, committees were formed at these workshops to address each of the pertinent bullying prevention subtopics and the functions of these subcommittees were clearly delineated.

The teachers under the auspices of Mr. McGranahan and Mrs. Carmean administered a formal survey, copyrighted in 1996 by Dan Olweus, to the students in Grades 3 to 8 in February 2004 and its results were analyzed by them and shared with the project chairperson in May 2004. Overall, Presentation was found to be no different from any other school which had been surveyed: 10% of the students said they had been bullied, 10% said that they have bullied. What was overwhelming (90.5%) was the fact that sympathies lie with the victim, but that the children felt powerless to do something to help. Another salient point was that the children would look to their parents for help, but that school might not be contacted in regard to the ongoing problem. The Olweus program addresses all of these points and, from our perspective as educators, gives us the tools to rectify these situations through instruction, modeling, counseling, and in general changing the atmosphere of our school so that bullying is not a part of day-to-day life here at Presentation.

Our weekly communication channels include letters home so that parents have learned about the survey and in the fall there was a Kick-off to present to the school community the plans to implement the Olweus program on a school-wide basis. Anyone

who is involved with Presentation will be expected to embrace the tenets of the Olweus program and to effectuate them consistently and conscientiously.

Committee	Function	Members
Coordinating	Synchronize all subcommittees' contributions into coherent whole; develop communication methods for teaching staff; present project to parents and students.	Nancy Scharnikow, Principal; Anne Marie Barford, Chairperson; Marge Schmidt, Primary; Kay Carrigan, Middle Grades; Bernadette Ruch, Junior High; Ann Marie Sielski, Specials; Linda Bowers, parent; Mary Ann Culbertson, non-teaching staff; Eileen Ford, counselor
Policy (Rules, sanctions, intervening	Implement developed rules into existing code; develop sanctions for infractions and positive consequences for compliance; develop tracking system and communication system.	Trudy Rocks, Chairperson; Joan Williams, secretary; Cathy Burgoyne, Mary Ellen Dowling, Colleen Graham, Anne Swoyer
Questionnaire	Administer and analyze survey; interpret data; share results	Montgomery County Intermediate Unit
Classroom Meetings	Logistics, frequency, cycle of meetings; resources; additional training.	Kate McHugh, Judy Anderson, Joyce McQuoid
Teacher, staff continual training	Non-teacher training; staff discussion groups; communication.	Kathy Palombaro, Chairperson; Eileen Adelizzi, secretary; Mary Ann Bonner, Maureen Reilly
Special Events and Projects	Kick-off (how, when, speakers, giveaways, etc.); printing rules posters; parent and student involvement.	Joan Schroeder, Chairperson; Megan Casey, secretary; Helene Long, Cathy Robinson, Lettie Switzer, Kate Iacobellis

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Nature of the Project

Our project is based on the research done by Dan Olweus concerning school students bullying one another in Sweden and Norway. This research indicates that bullying is an underlying problem among students of all ages. We at Presentation B.V.M. School would like to see a reduction in the frequency of bullying incidents, to increase the self-esteem in all our students and to empower students to stand up to bullies and to come to the aid of those being bullied.

We plan to create a more caring school climate and to teach life skills strategies that build self-esteem. We will emphasize a positive environment where all members of the Presentation B.V.M. School family will value their own worth and the worth of others. This will be accomplished through classroom meetings where the teacher will act as the facilitator of the meeting. Various topics, grounded in the tenants of our Catholic faith, will focus on the importance of community, the uniqueness of each individual, and the ability to make good choices. Class meeting rules will be posted in each classroom and there will be posters throughout the school highlighting a positive atmosphere. During the school year various grades will write essays, make signs, create posters, and write stories, focusing on acceptance. These will then be displayed throughout the school. The discipline policy of Presentation B.V.M. School will continue to reflect consistency and fairness in every area of concern, while implementing new rules in regard to bullying behavior.

Need for the Project

Based on both informal and formal surveys, we found that most of our children who are bullied turn solely to their parents for help. The school is rarely contacted until a major incident occurs. The survey indicated that a number of students had been bullied, and we feel that this is a area of concern for our community. No child should feel unwanted or alone and as adults it is our responsibility to foster an environment where everyone is accepted for who he or she is. Any form of cruelty to another is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Presentation B.V.M. School. We are a Christian community that affords all our students a safe and comfortable place to learn and grow. Consequently, we are endeavoring to heighten awareness of and sensitivity to the individuals involved in bullying situations.

Desired Outcomes

Olweus's research tells us not to anticipate any major behavior changes in the first year of the implementation of our project. This first year is to consist mainly of education and training for the entire school community. Our initial efforts will concentrate on raising awareness within the entire school community on the effects of bullying. These endeavors will include

- ❖ The installation of a class meeting protocol whereby students can freely and without punitive consequences express their concerns about various social topics. Faculty will complete reports highlighting faith references, meeting topics covered, and teacher evaluation of the meeting.
- ❖ The establishment of a reporting system for both class meeting input and bullying incident referrals. We are also instituting the BLOG – the “Bullying

Log” – that will be kept by staff members. The various BLOGs will contain detailed assessments of behavior problems on busses, at the recess yard, and in gym classes. Faculty will solicit pertinent information about any bullying incidents that will then be noted in the BLOGs. These notes can then be referred to in order to pinpoint quickly and efficiently the beginnings of any problems.

- ❖ The development of intervention procedures for both the protection of the bully targets and the reinforcement of positive social interaction for the bullies themselves.

As we proceed through the second year, we predict that the students will be more comfortable with class meetings. This should build a sense of class cohesion and community and positive peer social control. Students will have developed some of the techniques necessary to recognize and possibly to intervene in a bullying situation. We anticipate a rise in reports as awareness of the nature of bullying increases and that bullying incidents will decline as the program progresses. Evidence of this will lie in the eventual decrease in the number of Bullying Incident Forms on file with both principal and homeroom teacher and reportage of incidents in the BLOGs. These anticipated fluctuations are consistent with the Olweus research.

The most difficult goal will be encouraging the students to report a bullying incident to an authority figure without feeling that there will be repercussions from their peers. Our heightened awareness of and sensitivity to the bullying problems will help to bolster students' confidence in reporting these incidents. We hope this may be achieved by our third year into the project.

Ultimately, we are looking for an improvement in the social climate of our school and a reduction in any general anti-social behavior. We hope to eliminate existing

bully/victim problems among our school children; to prevent the development of new problems by improving peer relations; and to improve the general atmosphere in our school. We want to reflect an environment characterized by warmth and respect for others led by a compassionate staff that promotes our values and does not accept intolerance in any form.

Resources

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program that we have chosen to implement as part of our continuous effort to create a caring community has several components. It is a universal program; in other words, it is to be a school-wide effort. It is systems-oriented, individual-oriented, preventive, and problem solving. It focuses on changing norms and behavior; it is research-based and not time limited. The program is a work-in-progress and requires continual systematic efforts over time.

We have consulted and been schooled by experienced personnel from our Intermediate Unit who have inserviced us in the Olweus program. They have provided us with quantitative materials with which to work: *Bullying Prevention Program Blueprint, Teacher Handbook, Bullying at School: What we Know and What We can Do, the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire*, and supplemental lesson plans. Both counselors are available for timely feedback on any concern that may arise in the course of our effectuation of the program.

Our library houses a myriad of workbooks, reference material, and reproducible forms, all centered on the topic of bullying and also concerned with the development of positive attitudes, self-esteem, and socialization. Teachers have easy access to these materials and employ them not only for class meetings but also for the life skills program.

Team Visit

The Presentation B.V.M. student has been exposed to facets of the Olweus Bullying Program and the various life skills strategies since May of 2004. What will be apparent to the team when they visit is that Presentation B.V.M. has taken major steps to transform itself into a “No Bully Zone.”

Laminated posters outlining our school-wide rules will be prominent everywhere in the halls and in the classrooms. Class meetings will be occurring on a regular basis. These will address not only bullying concerns but also the desire of all Presentation B.V.M. personnel to create a caring community. Children will feel free to express their personal issues and hopes along with their anxieties and fears and rest safe knowing that their words and feelings will be met with a caring, kind perspective from both their teachers and their peers.

Good manners and self-respect will be evident as the team traverses the halls and the classroom atmosphere should reflect courteous attention to the lessons presented and obvious respect of students toward each other and their teachers and vice versa.

The resurveying of students on a periodic basis should demonstrate a decrease in occurrences of bullying and an upswing in the empowerment of victims and observers of bullying behavior.

Evaluation Components

Certainly a resurvey of the students who have now been active participants in the Olweus Bullying Program and the Life Skills program over the last year is necessary. This will be scheduled in the spring of each year. Such a survey should show some

decline in the number of bullying situations and the principal should also attest to quantitative results in the amount of time she needs to spend on disciplinary matters.

In order to assess the comprehension of the anti-bullying message we are trying to convey, the students themselves have been encouraged to perform skits and to prepare oral presentations to reflect their understanding of the “No Bullying” policy at Presentation B.V.M. School. Both as audience members and participants, students will have opportunities to experience peer-driven presentations that incorporate the unacceptability of any kind of bullying.

Class meetings should run smoothly as the students are now fully acquainted with and accustomed to said meetings as part of everyday life at Presentation B.V.M. School. Students should be more verbal about and more open to sharing ideas and feelings about almost any topic.

The incidence of reportage should be on the increase as well as students becoming more comfortable with confiding in their teachers. Student confidence in the program and its goals should insure the quick resolution of any conflict between bully and victim. Progress or lack thereof will be reviewed and reevaluated annually at a predetermined faculty meeting.

Vision for the Project

We have a caring community that taps into our children’s capacity for moral thinking, compassion, and mutual respect. By modeling and recognizing friendliness, courtesy, appropriate behavior, and concern for others, we adults will hopefully see an increase in those same qualities in our Presentation B.V.M. students, both in and outside the classroom.

It is to this end that we not only propose to install the Olweus Bullying Program as an intimate and vital component of our school philosophy, but also that we encourage and endorse the Life Skills program which examines and teaches, via class meetings, socialization skills and drug and alcohol abuse prevention. For the primary grades, we utilize the *I Can Problem Solve* program in which teacher and child work together to think of solutions to everyday problems.

Presentation B.V.M. School has always promoted interaction between students and their peers, as with Student Council and Movie Nights; between older students and younger students, as with Pres Kids Care and prayer partners; between students and senior citizens, as with letters to shut-ins and musical performances at retirement homes. In this vein of cooperation and sharing, we highlight activities, such as Teachers' Coffee and Act of Kindness Month, during each trimester so that our children reach out and realize their connection to others.

Our ultimate goal understandably rests in our students' acceptance of and commitment to the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Their acknowledgement of the reality of the all-encompassing love of God will hopefully extend to the world around them and impel them to become that much more deeply involved in their community of faith. They will learn to be each other's caretakers and always look upon one another as a gift from God.

	<p style="text-align: center;">Presentation B.V.M. School Cultivates a Caring Community: Creating a “No Bullying”Zone Preliminary Planning Activities</p>
March 2003	Discussion at faculty meeting of Olweus Bullying Program
April 2003	Informal survey of student body to determine frequency of bullying incidents
June 2003	Discussion of results at faculty meeting
September 2003	Began research on bullying
November 2003	Two day workshop at Montgomery County Intermediate Unit; Faculty and staff in serviced on Olweus’s Bullying Program; set up committees to implement program
January 2004	Faculty and staff discussed <i>Life Skills</i> (grades 3-8) and <i>I Can Problem Solve (Grades K – 3)</i> ; Committees revised; developed time schedule for classroom meetings
February 2004	Middle States meeting at Archbishop Carroll High School, Radnor, PA; Administered formal Olweus Bullying Survey
March 2004	Faculty discussed Middle States options; Decided to incorporate the bullying theme into the Middle States project
May 2004	Faculty determined Middle States/Bullying groups; Met in groups and worked on plans; Montgomery County Intermediate Unit presented an analysis of survey
Summer 2004	Steering Committee- overviewed and outlined requirements for Project; Rules Committee- planned strategies and designed forms for use in Project

Creating a “No Bullying” Zone
Timeline

School Year 2004 - 2005		
First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
<p>Establish Yearly Theme: Education</p> <p>Update work of Committees</p> <p>Student and Faculty Bullying Kick-off;</p> <p>Parents’ Kickoff</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings- essential component of program</p> <p>Special Events: Posters Scarecrows</p> <p>Educate Support Staff and Coaches</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p>	<p>Special Events: Valentine Love Posters Meet the Author</p> <p>Integration into the curriculum: Social Studies Language Arts Physical Education</p> <p>Talent Show: Bullying Commercials or Skits</p> <p>Act of Kindness Month</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p>	<p>Weekly PA Announcements</p> <p>Continue integration in the curriculum</p> <p>Special Events: Bumper Stickers Essays</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Field Day- cooperative games</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p> <p>Resurvey students, faculty, parents</p> <p>Review/Revise Rules and Reporting System</p> <p>Evaluate Strengths and Weaknesses of Program</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Supervision System</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Discussion Groups</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Class Meetings</p>

Creating a “No Bullying” Zone
Timeline

School Year 2005 - 2006		
First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
<p>Establish Yearly Theme</p> <p>Annual Kick-Off: Speaker</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">File Minutes</p> <p>Special Events</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Posters, signs</p> <p>Update support staff and coaches</p> <p>Educate new faculty members</p> <p>Weekly P.A. announcements</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p>	<p>Winter Olympics</p> <p>Integration into the curriculum</p> <p>Weekly P.A. announcements</p> <p>Act of Kindness Month</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Parent Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p>	<p>Conflict Resolution workshop:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Directed by Intermediate Unit</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Enhance anti-bullying message</p> <p>Weekly P.A. announcements</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p> <p>Resurvey students, faculty and parents</p> <p>Review/Revise Rules</p> <p>Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of program</p>

Creating a “No Bullying” Zone
Timeline

School Year 2006 - 2007		
First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
<p>Establish Yearly Theme</p> <p>Team Building – I. U.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Directed by Intermediate Unit</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Follow-up to Conflict Resolution Workshop</p> <p>Annual Kick-Off</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Special Events</p> <p>Educate new faculty members</p> <p>Update support staff and coaches</p> <p>Development of an improved reporting system</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p>	<p>Catholic Schools Week</p> <p>Integration into the curriculum</p> <p>Weekly P.A. announcements</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p>	<p>Peer Mediation System Workshop</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Directed by Intermediate Unit</p> <p>Weekly P.A. announcements</p> <p>Regular Classroom Meetings</p> <p>Review BLOGs</p> <p>Resurvey students, faculty and parents</p> <p>Review/Revise Rules</p> <p>Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of program</p>

Creating a “No Bullying” Zone
Timeline

School Year 2007 - 2008		
First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
Establish Yearly Theme	Catholic Schools Week	Conflict Resolution workshop
Annual Kick-Off	Weekly P.A. announcements	Directed by Intermediate Unit
Peer Mediation Update	Integration into the curriculum	Regular Classroom Meetings
Weekly P.A. announcements	Regular Classroom Meetings	Resurvey students, faculty, and parents
Regular Classroom Meetings	Review BLOGs	Review BLOGs
Special Events		Review/Revise Rules
Educate new faculty members		Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of program
Update support staff and coaches		
Review BLOGs		

Creating a “No Bullying” Zone
Timeline

School Year 2008 - 2009		
First Trimester	Second Trimester	Third Trimester
Establish Yearly Theme	Catholic Schools Week	Weekly P.A. announcements
Team Building	Integration into the curriculum	Regular Classroom Meetings
Directed Intermediate Unit	Weekly P.A. announcements	Resurvey
Annual Kick-Off	Regular Classroom Meetings	Review BLOGs
Regular Classroom Meetings	Review BLOGs	Review/Revise Rules
Special Events		Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of program
Educate new faculty members		
Update support staff and coaches		
Weekly P.A. announcements		
Review BLOGs		

Section III – Adherence to the Middle States Standards for Accreditation

#1 Philosophy, Mission, Beliefs, and/or Objectives

The Standard: The institution has clearly written statements of philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives that convey the general and specific purposes of the educational programs and that express expectations for quality. Stakeholders, including staff, parents, and governing body members, understand, accept, and give input into the development of the organization’s philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. These documents are appropriate for the groups served and are reviewed periodically.

The mission of Presentation B.V.M. School is to provide a nurturing environment in which each child can achieve his potential. Within this environment the school community endeavors to work together to understand, accept, and follow the Gospel message of Jesus. With faith as our framework, a balanced and traditional program of intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social activities fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect and academic excellence. Involvement in school, parish, and community activities encourages the children to participate in the Catholic Church’s mission to serve all. The Student/Parent Handbook that delineates our mission and philosophy is reviewed and revised annually by the entire staff.

#2 Governance and Leadership

The Standard: The governance and administration work in partnership to ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the organization through the establishment of policy and oversight of leadership. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. The administration of the organization provides a productive work environment, timely and open communication, and the leadership necessary to plan both day-to-day operations and the long-term future of the institution. The school is chartered, licensed, or authorized by a state, nation, or authority, which operates in the public interest.

Presentation B.V.M. School is a Catholic Parish School in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Its administrative policy is divided into two categories: managerial and

educational. The general management policy of the school is found in the *Policies and Procedures Manual* of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The principal and teachers implement this policy in collaboration with the pastor. The Office of Catholic Education offers professional assistance in the form of written communications and supervisory visits. Any policy specific to Presentation B.V.M. School is developed by the principal and pastor in accord with Archdiocesan directives.

The school's educational policy is determined by the Office of Catholic Education of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in agreement with the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. Guidelines for the curriculum of the school are determined by the curriculum committees of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Individual teachers carry out the specific implementation of these guidelines and policies under the direct supervision of the principal.

Specific school policies are published in a *Student Handbook* that was created collaboratively by the principal and faculty members and endorsed by the pastor. This handbook is periodically reviewed.

The principal recognizes the pastor as the leader of the parish and school. All major decisions regarding the school's current and future goals are made together with the final authority resting with the pastor. The pastor empowers the principal to make the decisions relating to the educational programs of the school.

The principal works together with the Home and School Association to identify the needs of the families and the school. The principal also serves as a liaison between the Parish Council and the school community. The administration stays well informed of

educational development by attending monthly district meetings and various professional development programs approved by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

#3 Organizational Design and Staff

The Standard: The organizational structure of the institution provides the vehicle for carrying out the established philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives of the educational program and support services. A clearly defined set of reporting relationships exists and administrative, instructional, and support staff are qualified, competent and sufficient in number to allow the effective delivery of quality education to students. Staff assessment procedures are in place, are clear to all involved, and are collaborative. On-going professional development, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and collegial relationships among staff and administration are evident and conducive to cooperative action.

The school operates under the spiritual guidance of the Pastor of Presentation B.V.M. Parish and under the educational leadership of its appointed principal. Our faculty includes nineteen full-time educators who teach kindergarten through eighth grade, technology, and library skills. Our staff is supplemented by a kindergarten teacher's aide and four part-time faculty members who teach Honors Math, Music, Art, and Physical Education. Members of the faculty actively continue their education by attending educational workshops. Specific responsibilities are outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

The principal of the school initiates programs, directs and supports the faculty, and is part of all decisions which affect the children of Presentation B.V.M. School. The principal enjoys an open relationship with the faculty. She encourages collaboration and acknowledges and employs the talents and skills of her staff. Weekly memos, faculty meetings, faculty morning prayer, department meetings, and team meetings contribute to the smooth flow of communication.

The principal also maintains good communication with the school community. Weekly family communication envelopes, the Presentation B.V.M. School website,

parish bulletin updates, and the schoolnotes.com website keep school families fully informed.

Teachers develop professionally and personally through several forms of evaluation. Each year the principal encourages teachers to evaluate themselves through goal setting as well as through formal and informal assessments. Also the principal informally evaluates each teacher during her frequent visits to the classrooms. Examination of each teacher's plan book, roll book, and grade book keeps her informed of class progress. Formal evaluation occurs once a year with the principal using the tool provided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In-service opportunities contribute to the professional development of each teacher; some opportunities are provided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

Subject Area Coordinators meet periodically with faculty members to discuss problems, share ideas, and communicate information within their disciplines.

#4 Educational Programs

The Standard: The educational programs consist of both carefully planned and well executed curriculum programs that include appropriate standards, solid instructional pedagogy, and appropriate assessment based on research and best practices. The educational programs are sufficiently financed, periodically reviewed, and mission-appropriate. They are developed to meet and address the needs of students and are designed to produce student learning at all levels. Effective policies and practices are in place, along with instructional materials, technology, and equipment that are appropriate, functional and well maintained.

The curriculum for all grades is provided and reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Curriculum Committees of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Principals and teachers may serve of these committees. Curriculum information is disseminated at district, faculty, and coordinator meetings. Implementation of the course of study builds upon the basic skills taught at the primary level and expands to the development of higher order thinking

skills. Teachers employ various teaching methods and techniques to meet the needs of their students. These methods include whole group instruction, cooperative learning, flexible grouping, hands-on-exploration, and independent study. The students are encouraged and guided to reach their fullest potential. In addition to the core curriculum, students have weekly classes in Music, Art, Technology, Library Instruction, and Physical Education.

The basic principles of the Catholic faith are introduced in the primary grades. The kindergarten children receive instruction in all subject areas. Manipulatives are used to provide hands-on activities and interactive role-play helps the children internalize learning. The program is designed to instill a love of learning and a willingness to explore without fear of failure.

In the primary grades these principles are incorporated into all areas of instruction. During second grade the children are further initiated into our Catholic faith with the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. In Mathematics the students are instructed in the areas of computational skills and basic concepts. Problem-solving and critical thinking activities, as outlined by the NCTM, begin at this level. Teachers encourage hands-on learning through the use of manipulatives. In Integrated Language Arts, a literature-based program is used to develop the students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. In the areas of Science and Social Studies teachers use a hands-on approach so that students have opportunities to experiment and explore various topics. Children are grouped heterogeneously in most subject areas.

In the Middle Grades, the Religion curriculum includes the teachings of Jesus through the commandments, the sacraments, and a study of the Old Testament. The students complete their initiation into our Catholic faith with the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the sixth grade. The students are grouped homogeneously for Mathematics. The NCTM standards are followed with continued emphasis on the problem-solving process. The Honors Math Program begins in fourth grade for qualifying students. The Integrated Language Arts program continues to use a literature-based series as the basis of its instruction. Supplemental materials encourage the children to experience literature at their own level. A Studies Skills course provided by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit teaches time management, note-taking, test-taking, and organizational skills. The Science curriculum covers life, earth, and physical science. Students are provided with opportunities to explore and experience science through lab activities. The Social Studies curriculum begins with the study of our home state, Pennsylvania. It then expands to include the study of geography and cultures of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

Departmental instruction begins in the Junior High. The Religion curriculum includes the study of the life and teachings of Christ and the sacraments in seventh grade; Church history and morality are the main topics covered in eighth grade. The students are encouraged to take their place in the faith community by leading the school community in a variety of liturgical and service activities. For the study of Mathematics, the children are grouped homogeneously. This sequential instructional program includes pre-algebra in grades seven and eight. The Honors Math students complete the first year of high school algebra. In Integrated Language Arts, the literature-based program exposes the

students to a variety of literary genres. This program is further enhanced with the use of novels. Regular lab activities increase the students' learning and interest in both Life Science and Earth Science. The study of American History is the focus of the Social Studies Curriculum.

For assessment purposes the school year is divided into trimesters. Every child's progress is measured in each area of the curriculum by a variety of teacher assessment tools. Classroom observations, independent projects, group projects, performance assessments, as well as traditional testing form the basis for these grades. Teachers issue mid-trimester progress reports as needed. Also, children in grades 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8 participate in the *Terra Nova Testing* program.

Funding for the school's educational programs comes from a variety of sources, such as tuition, fundraising, grants, donations, and government funding.

#5 Learning Media Services and Technology

The Standard: Learning media services and technology function as important tools to enhance classroom instruction and other school activities as grade level appropriate. Well-organized information resources reinforce knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned in other program areas and broaden minds by providing opportunities to conduct research and interact with information.

Classes are allotted time weekly for instruction in the use of the library, for independent research, and book circulation. During this time the librarian instructs both formally and informally. Our library resources are computerized, using the Winnebago system, and a research pod consisting of four multimedia systems is available for student and faculty use. Staff and student requests for current literature and technology software are encouraged, accepted, and purchased according to prioritized available funds. Supplementary resources such as videos, CDs, and educational kits are catalogued and

stored in our Audio-Visual room. Teachers are provided with a list of items according to subject matter to assure accessibility.

The Presentation B.V.M. School community recognizes technology as an educational tool of today. Our technology team, composed of volunteers, teachers, parents, alumni, and parishioners meets regularly to implement our development plan. Students receive computer instruction beginning at the kindergarten level. The computer teacher, along with the faculty, strives to incorporate technology into the curriculum during weekly scheduled time in the lab as well as to supplement traditional lessons in each classroom. Many of our students are using technology on a daily basis. New materials are presented and shared at faculty meetings and classes are provided to familiarize the staff and provide a hands-on approach.

The computer lab includes eighteen systems, a video projector, laptop, interactive white board, and adjustable seating. Each classroom is equipped with a computer center housing four systems and access to a printer. In addition, grades three, four, seven, eight, the library, and the computer lab are networked; this includes Internet access. Interactive white boards, laptops, and projectors are available for classroom use.

An experienced Technology Team, consisting of staff and parents, meets on a regular basis to make repairs, update systems, and strategize long-term goals. Grants, fundraisers, and donations offset the cost of purchasing new computers. Teachers are encouraged to update their skills through technology courses. Our technology plan is annually revised.

#6 Student Services

The Standard: The school provides services to students that optimize their preparation for learning. Chief among these services are health services and, at appropriate levels, guidance including academic and personal counseling. Preventive and

emergency health care services are provided and health and safety policies are clear and well understood. Other services that may be provided include transportation, food service, services for special needs students, and admissions and placement.

The School District of Philadelphia and Cheltenham Township provide transportation to and from school for children who live within the allotted distances. An after-school C.A.R.E.S. program is available for interested families. A lunchroom is available where snacks and drinks can be purchased. Students can participate in weekly hot dog, pizza, and monthly special lunches. Stationery supplies can be purchased at our school store.

Health services are provided by Cheltenham Township nurses for legally required screenings. Parent volunteers provide first aid and notify parents as needed.

The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit offers remedial instruction in Reading. Both formal and informal guidance counseling, diagnostic testing, and remedial speech and language services are also provided.

An Elementary Support Team (EST) consisting of trained faculty and Montgomery County Intermediate Unit support staff has been implemented. The purpose of EST is to offer additional academic support to students, teachers, and parents. To deal with any emergency situation, a Crisis Management Team has devised plans and procedures for the school community. These policies follow and complement those proposed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

The Cheltenham Township Police Department sponsors a “Drug Awareness Resistance Education” (D.A.R.E.) program for the fifth and sixth grades on alternate years.

#7 Student Life and Student Activities

The Standard: A healthy atmosphere exists for all students. At all levels, non-discriminatory, appropriate student activities that supplement classroom experiences or community life are provided. An appropriate student activities program fosters a positive intellectual, cultural, and social climate, promotes growth in student leadership and social interaction skills, and encourages students' special interests.

The school's philosophy is fostered by the faculty and staff of Presentation B.V.M. School by creating an atmosphere where each student's value is respected. We recognize each child is unique coming to us with varied talents and skills.

Realizing that participation in clubs, publications, or teams enhances the spiritual, physical, and social lives of children, our school community provides numerous extracurricular activities. These include Student Council, Liturgy Group, Pres Kids Care, CYO (sports and activities), Children's Choir, Art Club, Scouts, Yearbook, Newspaper, Band, Bowling League, Home and School Social Events, Safeties, Mission Reps, and Computer Techs.

All school-related activities are supervised by staff or qualified adult volunteers and most are financially self-supported. The few that are not are subsidized by the school.

The school appreciates that a large portion of the students' day is geared towards academic and spiritual growth and exercises its responsibility to balance the formal education with extracurricular activities. These promote leadership and social skills and challenge the children to reach beyond their everyday routine and explore their interests.

#8 Facilities

The Standard: The school facilities, consisting of the site, building(s), and equipment, provide a safe, well-maintained physical environment that supports optimal student development and achievement. The school facilities are appropriate to implement the stated philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives of the school.

To accommodate all students and programs offered at Presentation B.V M., the limited space must be fully utilized and maintained. Classrooms are well lit and ventilated with ceiling fans. Each contains its own computer center with grades three, four, seven and eight networked with internet access. In addition to the classrooms, there is a full service computer lab where instruction is given to each grade. The computers are maintained by the computer teacher, the tech team, and technology parent volunteers.

Presentation also has a well-stocked, computerized library to support the instruction of library skills and research. The library doubles as a meeting/conference room for the school and parish community. The faculty room on the third floor, besides being a lunchtime retreat for teachers, is also utilized by the speech teacher and school nurse for screenings. The gym is another multi-purpose room. It is used as a cafeteria, a band room, and a gym for physical education and Cares.

The school also has an Honors Math room for the advanced students in grades four through eight, an AV room for teacher resources, and a functioning nurse's office. The building has sufficient number of bathrooms and new water fountains on each floor. The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit provides a van, adjacent to the school, for remedial reading and counseling. The church and church hall are also used for religious, social, and educational activities.

The students and staff are familiar with the facilities and are prepared for emergencies by participating in fire drills and shelter-in-place drills. All facilities are fully maintained by an excellent maintenance team who insure a safe environment for all.

#9 Health and Safety

The Standard: A safe and healthy environment for teaching and learning is provided. Both preventive and emergency health and safety procedures are clear and well documented. The school environment is productive and orderly.

The building is inspected annually and meets health, safety, and fire regulations as mandated by Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, and Pennsylvania State Codes. Fire alarms and clearly marked exits are easily accessible throughout the building and auxiliary lighting is also installed. Fire drills are held to insure student safety.

All exterior doors are equipped with panic bars. The first floor library entrance provides handicapped access; this access is restricted to the first floor.

School nurses provided by Cheltenham Township regularly update student records to insure that inoculations and vaccinations are current and that students have had their state-mandated physicals and dental examinations. There is also a system of parent volunteers who staff the nurse's office to attend to illnesses and injuries which may occur on a daily basis.

Guidance counselors render support and therapy for those students with learning or emotional concerns. Student psychological testing is available when the principal, teacher, parent, and psychologist deem it necessary. An Educational Support Team has been organized to assist teachers seeking alternative ways to promote the academic and social success of children experiencing difficulties.

A Crisis Management Team is in place, which maintains the Shelter-in-Place plan and supplies in case of emergency. Additionally, to insure the safety of all children, a Safe Arrival Program is in operation, emergency drills are scheduled, first aid kits are available for outdoor recess, medications and emergency forms are taken on field trips, and special arrangements for health care are made during field day.

All information pertaining to health and safety may be found in the Parent Handbook which every family receives.

#10 Finances

The Standard: Financial resources are sufficient to provide the educational opportunities defined in the school's philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. The business practices of the institution promote confidence in the organization's ability to manage fiscal and material resources in a responsible manner and to follow prescribed budgeting and accounting principles. The majority of resources raised for school purposes are dedicated to school operations.

Tuition, registration fee, Home and School fundraisers and a parish subsidy of 26% provide the bulk of Presentation B.V.M. School income. The operating budget of the school is mainly financed by tuition. The pastor, principal, and the business manager meet to determine the annual tuition rate that is published in late January. All books except religion books are purchased through government funding. Additional resources as determined by faculty and principal are purchased with donations and through fundraising. The pastor shares the budgetary needs with his parish council. The continuation of special programs is determined by the pastor with input from the principal and parish council.

The administration is both prudent and frugal as reflected in the 26% parish subsidy. The rectory pays all bills. A detailed monthly report of all school banking is sent to the principal and the pastor by the parish secretary. The Home and School Association bank statements are reviewed by the pastor. All major purchases are discussed with the pastor and the business manager. This year a five-year plan for building improvements and maintenance was proposed by the maintenance engineer and members of the parish council. The Archdiocesan Office of Financial Affairs audits parish operations every five years.

In addition, both the Home and School, as well as the school faculty and administration, have actively pursued and in many cases secured grant monies to facilitate such programs as technology and the arts.

#11 Assessment of Student Learning

The Standard: The assessment of student learning outcomes enables students to monitor their own learning progress and allows teachers to adapt their instruction to the specific learning needs of students. The school's effectiveness is assessed by examining areas such as student learning and performance, program evaluation, performance results for support services, graduate success, and client satisfaction. Results are used to develop strategies for improving service and program quality. Assessment results are communicated appropriately to parents/guardians, students, staff, and school community.

The advent of rubrics and a new report card fostered by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia have encouraged the development of teaching strategies that encompass varied learning styles. Test results are sent home on a regular basis and progress reports are issued during each trimester report period. Archdiocesan Curriculum Guidelines are clearly defined and implemented in each classroom. Analysis of the *Terra Nova* tests, given in the fall to Grades 4, 6, 7, and 8, and in the spring to Grades 2 and 3, helps to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in the learning process. These tests results are also used to identify students qualifying for the Honors Math Program and those students requiring remediation through the MCIU.

Students have been awarded academic scholarships that total thousands of dollars and reflect how well our academic programs succeed. Presentation alumni at area high schools consistently perform at or near the top of their classes.

#12 Planning

The Standard: The school makes use of strategic, long-range, and operational planning to continuously improve its educational programs and services. Improvement plans focus on student performance and organizational growth and engender continuous improvement across all aspects of the school organization. Externally validated processes for evaluation, strategic planning, and school/district improvement are

continuously maintained. Systematic analysis regarding student performance and organizational growth is coupled with analyses of instructional and organizational practices to ensure alignment with the school's philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. Trends in outcomes and results are projected and goals of demonstrated strategic merit are identified.

At the beginning of each year the faculty of Presentation B.V.M. School develops both school and individual spiritual, academic, and social goals for the coming year. The annual *Terra Nova* tests provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of our academic program, and teachers use these results in their planning. Regular faculty and subject area meetings avail teachers with the opportunity to share information and make recommendations and commendations as the school year progresses. In-service opportunities are made available to staff for further support and training.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia provides valuable information and support throughout the school year. Regular visits by its representatives validate our mission and recognize our adherence to its policies. Our principal communicates regularly with the archdiocesan office and attends scheduled district, area, and national meetings. Area high schools communicate their needs to us so that our students are well prepared for their academic future.

Our weekly communication envelope updates the entire school community. This tool helps share not only important routine information but also provides insights into our goals and future plans. Quarterly Home and School Association meetings offer faculty and parents the chance to share ideas.

The implementation of the Olweus Bullying Program is but one facet of the long-range improvement plan undertaken at Presentation B.V.M. School. Another continuing endeavor is to further integrate the use of computers into daily classroom life. Our

present technology plan extends to the year 2007, and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia has given its approval. Our aims are to provide the school community with global communication, to utilize network infrastructure for internet access within all classrooms, to fully utilize file management potential, to continue to promote the use of technology as a teaching tool, and to supply the faculty with the necessary training and tools to meet the ever-changing demands of teaching.