

XBSS Strategic Plan Approved in November 2018

Over the past 175 years, Xaverian education has been transformative in the lives of young people. In Xaverian schools, students have been invited to encounter Jesus through an education that helps them to uncover their own gifts, to nurture their passions and challenge them to become the people God created them to be by placing their talents at the service of God.

At the heart of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools has been a particular vision - a certain way of seeing the world - that began with the founder of the Xaverian Brothers and continues in their schools in Europe, North America, and Africa. Theodore James Ryken believed that young people, especially those who were the most vulnerable in a society that did not know or value the gospel of Jesus Christ, could be nurtured and formed by a core community who believed in them, in their uniqueness and potential as given by God.

Since 1839, when Theodore Ryken was first inspired to form a religious congregation of laymen in Belgium, the Xaverian Brothers have worked to fulfill his vision for young women and men. As consecrated religious brothers, the Congregation of the Brothers of St. Francis Xavier would themselves follow a pathway deeply rooted in prayer and contemplation leading them to encounter Jesus Christ and to dedicate themselves and their ministries to serving his mission of establishing the Kingdom of God. It was Brother Ryken's belief that through their simple lifestyle and their reflective, prayerful living that they would learn to discover God in the "common, ordinary, unspectacular flow of everyday life."

Echoing Brother Ryken's persistent plodding, the Fundamental Principles of the Xaverian Brothers reminds those who follow in Ryken's footsteps that:

You are called to a life of constant searching.
Let the developments and changes of your times
be a source both of confidence and challenge to you.
Fundamental Principles

With an openness to the Spirit, the Xaverian Brothers have carried out their mission to serve the Church in its work of evangelization, particularly through the Church's ministry of education.

Today, Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools engage in this mission in service of Brother Ryken's vision, the charism of the community, and the mission that has grown from it.

From Embracing the Future with Hope

The subsequent XBSS Strategic Plan, led by the XBSS Office staff, seeks to engage all XBSS stakeholders – Xaverian Brothers, Members, directors or trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students – in further service to the mission and vision of a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School. Through a collaborative approach, it seeks to strengthen the network by affording more intentional focus on formational programming, governance, funding, improved external branding/marketing, and our call to serve those on the peripheries.

Programming/Formation

We seek to develop school communities in which we foster the belief and attitude that we “were created by the God of love, in God’s image and according to God’s likeness, to be a unique expression of God’s love.”

We believe that in our ministry we are called to educate the whole person – spirit, mind, and body. In building upon the legacy of the Xaverian Brothers, we believe that our ministry calls us to form enduring personal relationships within and among our communities.

From A Description of the Xaverian Charism as lived by Collaborators

Aspiration: To ensure the legacy, culture, and mission of a Xaverian education, XBSS aspires to engage our community of schools with opportunities to be formed in the charism, grow collaboratively as a network, and honor our guiding principles.

Goal 1: Initiate theological reflection on the foundational documents utilized by XBSS to ensure the evolving needs of our schools are met.

Action Items

1. Form a sub-committee to review key documents including *Embracing the Future with Hope and Mission, Vision, Values – Calls, Goals, Criteria*.
 - a. Discern relationship between documents. Update/revise as necessary key language that honors our guiding principles and offers the network clarity on what we represent.
 - i. Seek consensus on the link that ties us all together as XBSS schools; that which holds the network together.
 - b. Communicate widely and afford necessary professional development regarding any updates/changes/enhancements to documents that stress the Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, and Charism of XBSS.
 - c. Make recommendations for future review “process” of core XBSS documents, perhaps aligning with the Congregational Chapter every six years.

Goal 2: Enhance collaboration among Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools through the intentional formation of our network’s stakeholders (e.g. Administrators, Campus Ministers, Faculty/Staff, Boards, Members, Students, and potentially Parents/Alumni)

Action Items

1. Build upon collaboration, community, and best practice sharing by providing regional/network-wide gatherings, new programming, and/or resources for each unique stakeholder group.

- a. Ensure the primary focus is to assist schools in claiming and living the mission and our shared, Xaverian charism.
2. Enhance regular communication with XBSS stakeholders, building stronger, enduring relationships and engaging all on a deeper level with our mission and Xaverian spirituality.
3. Leverage outside resources, partnerships with Catholic colleges, and collaboration with other religious orders to benefit the intentional formation efforts within XBSS.
4. Enhance leadership development opportunities for selected school staff.
 - a. Create formational opportunities, specific to potential future XBSS leaders, that complement graduate programs in administration training.
 - b. Facilitate the placement of selected staff, when appropriate, on XBSS boards and committees.
5. Assess the possibility of creating common curriculum (and/or teacher resources) to enhance consistency of teaching and understanding on the history of the XB Congregation, Theodore Ryken, Francis Xavier, Xaverian charism and spirituality, and the XBSS network.
 - a. Implement resources as deemed appropriate through the preceding assessment process.
6. Seek better use of technology, webinars, online resources, and social media to engage stakeholders and offer improved formational opportunities.

Goal 3: Initiate assessment of the XBSS Mission Effectiveness Process.

Action Items

1. Conduct a thorough analysis of the strengths and challenges of the existing Mission Effectiveness Process; seek input from key stakeholders.
2. Consider similar Mission Effectiveness Processes and/or Covenant Agreements from other religious orders.
 - a. Potentially convene a sub-committee to make recommendations for modifications to the existing Mission Effectiveness Process.
3. Affirm or adapt the current XBSS Mission Effectiveness process to best serve the needs of the school in focusing on the Mission, Vision, Values, Calls, Goals, and Criteria of the Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools.
4. Seek improved or appropriate ways to involve the Members in the Mission Effectiveness Process

Diversity and Inclusion

As Xaverian educators, we seek to establish inclusive communities of faith in our schools and we embrace the challenges and opportunities of dialog between cultures. We are called to live the teachings of Jesus Christ in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, and we recognize our place is in solidarity and availability among the people.

From A Description of the Xaverian Charism as lived by Collaborators

Aspiration: As a Christian community, XBSS aspires to recognize the giftedness and dignity of every person, creating an inclusive community necessary for a life of service and social consciousness.

Goal 1: Create or enhance programming and opportunities which respect and support diversity and foster inclusion.

Action Items

1. Further define “diversity” and “inclusion” in our Xaverian context; build or enhance programming to better support the Congregation’s call to serve those on the periphery.
2. Investigate how to bring greater diversity to network schools through research, educational resources, and other effective means.
3. Seek new ways to support XBSS service programs that serve those on the periphery.
 - a. Expand collaboration among schools regarding student service opportunities.

Goal 2: Investigate options for expanded awareness and collaboration with the international ministries of the Xaverian Brothers.

Action Items

1. Seek ways to leverage potential relationship(s) with XB schools and/or ministries abroad.
2. Consider new, formational events designed to raise awareness and possibly initiate support of XB efforts abroad.

Funding

We affirm our commitment to “prayerfully reflect on the past, assess the present, and ponder the future with one another” as we respond to the call to minister in a Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School.

From A Description of the Xaverian Charism as lived by Collaborators

Aspiration: To further support and enhance the mission of a Xaverian education, we aspire to find new avenues of financial support, both for programming and fiscally sound operations.

Goal 1: Develop a strategic advancement plan to outline priorities for funding, long-term operational/funding needs for sponsorship, and provide overall direction on the process for approaching potential donors/funders.

Action Items

1. Define priorities and approach for securing long term financial support of XBSS operations.
2. Support current annual direct mail appeal for XBSS more intentionally and seek additional gifts to underwrite the costs of current programming.
3. Identify key donors and interests which may align to existing or new XBSS programming.
4. Explore foundation support (underwriting) of existing or new XBSS programming and/or operational costs.
5. Maintain regular communication with the Congregation and local schools regarding potentially overlapping donors and advancement plans.
6. Seek additional opportunities, when appropriate, to support local school advancement efforts, particularly in serving more students on the periphery.

Goal 2: Find new/alternative sources of revenue or expense reduction to support activities/programs across the network.

Action Items

1. Analyze the feasibility of collaborative business/academic decisions to minimize expenses across the network of schools.
 - a. Consider shared resources or leveraging economies of scale relative to appropriate operational and/or programmatic expenses, such as:
 - i. Insurance providers
 - ii. Online/Blended learning initiatives;
 - iii. STEM/STEAM Curriculum
 - iv. Misc. business/capital expenses

Members/Governance

This was the vision Theodore James Ryken had in view when he founded the congregation:

A band of Brothers who mutually help, encourage, and edify one another, and who work together.

Cultivate a sincere friendship and a warm affection for your sisters and brothers, for it is in the manifestation of honest concern and love for each other that you and they will show you are daughters and sons of Ryken and disciples of Jesus.

Fundamental Principles

Aspiration: To cultivate sincere, enduring, and effective relationships, we look to embrace a collaborative model of governance through sponsorship. Collectively and collegially, we aspire to build enduring relationships and structures that honor, protect and enhance the XBSS mission and vision.

Goal 1: Continue to assess future sponsorship model(s) in light of canonical underpinnings, requirements for valid sponsorship, and needs of the network.

Action Items

1. Form a task group to work directly with Xaverian Brothers' leadership to begin more formal discussions on the future governance needs/possibilities of the network.
 - a. Further develop possible sponsorship models including new Public Juridic Person (PJP), modifying for non-US leadership, and/or other applicable models.
 - b. Review how other religious orders are responding to similar future issues with governance.
2. To the extent possible, define, communicate, and implement steps which best position XBSS for any future governance changes.

Goal 2: Ensure genuine collaboration and communication among Members, XBSS office, Chief Administrators, Xaverian Brothers, and School Board leadership.

Action Items

1. Provide well-defined communication regarding the current XBSS governance structure and role of the Members.
 - a. Regularly review, update, and disseminate documents which clearly describe the current legal structures, bylaws, governance model, role of the members, and role of the local school boards.
2. Plan, annually, one joint meeting/social event with Members and Chief Administrators.
3. Offer boards, particularly new board members, with opportunities for consistent board formation, orientation to governance structures, and dialogue on network needs.

- a. Encourage and facilitate improved governance/board interaction and sharing among XBSS schools
- 4. Initiate regular and intentional sharing and communications with the Xaverian Brothers and Generalate staff.
 - a. Attend XB regional meetings once per year to share XBSS happenings, build enduring relationships, and seek input as necessary.
 - b. Strengthen communications dialogue and relationships with Xaverian Brothers through existing and new mechanisms.
- 5. Create additional formational opportunities for Members to grow in understanding of the Xaverian Charism and how schools embrace the Charism.
 - a. Regularly communicate with/to Members how network schools live out the mission.
- 6. In collaboration with chief administrators and boards, ensure a transparent mechanism for recruiting new Members.

Goal 3: Study the possibility of expanding the XBSS network or exploring partnerships with Catholic schools such that XBSS helps serve the greater good of Catholic education and implement recommendations, as appropriate.

Action Items

- 1. Identify, evaluate, and articulate the short and long-term gains/benefits and obstacles of welcoming additional schools into the XBSS network.
- 2. If desired, develop strategic approach for expanding the network.
 - a. Identify types of schools for consideration.
 - b. Determine both pro-active and responsive approaches: Ways in which XBSS proactively approaches schools of interest and ways in which XBSS responds to schools that express interest in joining the network.
 - c. Formulate procedural documents for how to add schools to the network.
- 3. (Assuming a desire exists) Review on-boarding and evaluation process to ensure multi-year support for new schools to the network.
- 4. Consider alternative forms of partnerships with non-network schools in such a way that Catholic education in the local community is strengthened.
 - a. Explore avenues for leveraging the talents found locally in XBSS to strengthen K-8 feeder schools and/or other surrounding Catholic schools.

Marketing and Brand Awareness

Ryken believed that with one word, "Xaverian," people would know the spirit which animated the congregation.

History of Xaverian Brothers: The Foundation Years

Aspiration: Faithful to our mission and vision, XBSS aspires, with zeal, to raise the profile of a Xaverian education in America and share the value it brings to our Church and the common good.

Goal 1: Improve external brand/imaging/marketing to raise the profile and create better awareness of the XBSS network of schools in national, Catholic educational circles.

Action Items

1. Form partnerships with Catholic Colleges/Universities, utilizing/matching their resources/programs with XBSS needs.
2. Establish stronger and more relevant relationships with national entities/organizations that are influential in Catholic education (Such as NCEA, FADICA, etc.)
 - a. Utilize networks to share XBSS success stories and raise awareness of the Mission/Charism of XBSS schools.
3. Increase number of XBSS educators who present at national conferences.
 - a. Share best practices, lift up other Catholic schools, raise awareness of XBSS network in the process.
4. Involve more XBSS students, via social media outlets, in the promotion of XBSS schools/happenings.
5. Review the marketing/branding of other Religious Sponsored School networks; adopt best practices; Consider strategic partnerships with other Religious Order Networks.
 - a. Consider programming such as a Joint Board forum with other networks.