

XBSS Strategic Plan 2023-2025

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.

Objective 1: Formation for Mission & Leadership

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.

A Description of the Xaverian Charism

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

XBSS Board Directors/Trustees

Goal 1: Help develop a local, board culture of continuous formation in the Xaverian charism and mission of Xaverian education.

- a. In collaboration with individual school efforts, bolster the existing on-boarding process of new directors/trustees.
- b. Afford boards access to more interactive, mission-oriented resources, workshops, and continuing education. Bolster board meeting prayers and board retreat materials that better engage the board in contemplation and active discussion on our Xaverian spirituality.
 - a. Build confidence among boards to further uphold/own their own formation.
- c. Revisit with boards and school heads the potential merits of forming a Mission Committee of the board and/or other methods for effectively structuring their on-going oversight of the school’s mission.

Goal 2: Identify and implement new ways to support boards in their governing role.

- a. Annually survey & assess board director needs and create programming in response to identified areas of support.
- b. Establish a more regular pattern for hosting in person (regional or network wide) board formation/programming events.
- c. Identify and collect (biennial) an agreed upon set of data points or measurables relative to XBSS Boards (e.g., gender, age, racial/ethnic diversity, board size, committees, etc.)
 - a. Share aggregate results and insights with Board Governance Committees to better inform their work and committee purpose.
- d. Leverage and share board resources from other Catholic, national networks and entities (such as NAIS & BoardSource).
- e. Better leverage the XBSS Board Handbook as a formational tool; highlighting the desired profile of a XBSS board director/trustee.

XBSS Faculty, Staff, Chief Admin

Goal 3: Create a rotational schedule for in-person, regional meetings of specific XBSS cohorts (CFO's, Advancement Directors, Admission Directors, etc.)

- a. Collaborate with Chief Administrators to determine which cohort/like-groups should be prioritized for networking and formation.
- b. Deliver formational and professional development programming accordingly.
- c. Offer annual, virtual opportunities for cohort groups to meet and collaborate.
- d. Utilizing a convener platform, and respecting the uniqueness of each school, identify XBSS (individual school) practices that should be shared across the network.
 - a. Strengthen relationships and communication among principals to maximize the effectiveness of sharing resources.

Goal 4: Identify and implement more targeted strategies to support heads of school in effectively working with and forming their own Boards.

Goal 5: Leveraging the existing relationship with Boston College's Crossroads program, where individuals can take non-credit online courses for adult spiritual discernment, explore the opportunity to create additional/new course work aimed at bolstering the formation of XBSS stakeholders in our Xaverian charism. Explore similar relationships/opportunities with other colleges and universities.

Goal 6: Create common curriculum and/or teacher resources to enhance the consistency of teaching and understanding on the history of the XB Congregation.

Members

Goal 7: Create additional formational opportunities for Members to grow in their understanding of the Xaverian charism and how schools embrace the charism.

Objective 2: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging

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.

A Description of the Xaverian Charism

ASPRIRATION: As a Christian community, XBSS aspires to recognize the giftedness and dignity of every person and celebrate a world-wide congregation of partners in mission who strive to live a life of service and social consciousness.

Goal 1: Further articulate what diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging means in our context today and provide schools with appropriate resources, rooted in our Catholic identity and Xaverian charism, to support DEIB work in their local context.

- a. Further engage Xaverian Brothers leadership, Chief Administrators, and Boards in ongoing dialogue on DEIB issues.
- b. Annually assess school and board needs, relative to DEIB work, and respond accordingly with requested support.

- i. Create centralized repository of resources, speakers, ideas, etc. that network schools have used and recommend.
- c. Ensure DEIB considerations/language are infused within all XBSS programs and materials (e.g. not treated as a disparate topic).

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

- a. Seek ways to leverage potential relationship(s) with XB schools and/or ministries abroad.
- b. Identify new, formational events designed to raise awareness and initiate support of XB efforts abroad.
- c. Invite/engage leadership from XB ministries abroad to participate in any XBSS programming, where and when appropriate.

Objective 3: Mission Sustainability and Advancement

As you prayerfully reflect on the past, assess the present, and ponder the future with your sisters and brothers, be considerate of this history and of this ministry. Yet, like Ryken, foster an attitude of openness to the needs of the Church and your world, and a willingness to follow Christ wherever He leads. 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.

From A Description of the Xaverian Charism as lived by Collaborators

ASPRIRATION: To ensure our sponsorship model is sustainable and of ongoing value to the network and Catholic education, we aspire to strengthen sponsorship revenue sources, provide clear lines of communication and transparency from the Members and Xaverian Brothers, and demonstrate a spirit of openness to (1) the needs of our church and Catholic education as a whole, (2) future sponsorship models, (3) and/or modes of operation within the network.

Goal 1: Expand sources of XBSS revenue from foundations/donors and/or other sources in support of existing and new XBSS programming, while remaining sensitive to donors specifically tied to a particular Xaverian Brothers Sponsored School.

Goal 2: Continue to assess future sponsorship model(s) considering canonical underpinnings, requirements for valid sponsorship, and needs of the network. Communicate any evolution of thinking and/or structural developments in sponsorship models.

Goal 3: Raise the profile of XBSS by intentionally sharing the gifts, talents, and resources of the network with our surrounding communities, other Catholic schools/networks, and national organizations.

- a. Increase number of XBSS educators who present at national conferences.
- b. Continue to explore partnerships and build relationships with area colleges/universities and national organizations engaged in the work of Catholic education.

- c. Invite schools, boards, and educators from outside XBSS to selected network professional development events.

Goal 4: Remain open to expanding the XBSS network or exploring partnerships with Catholic schools such that XBSS helps serve the greater good of Catholic education.

- a. Refresh criteria for assessing the feasibility of adding new schools to the network.

Goal 5: Review the organizational structure (or staffing) in the XBSS Sponsorship Office to ensure it meets the needs of the network.

- a. Consider stipend work for select school staff to bolster programming and/or material creation that supports the goals of the XBSS Strategic Plan.
- b. Explore the use of interns, volunteers, or retirees in achieving the goal.