



SCECINA MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL



# Limited Institutional Review Summary



*Spring 2009*



## Foreword

In October 2008, the Seccina Memorial Board of Directors approved a proposal from President Joe Therber to conduct a Limited Institutional Review (LIR). The purpose of a Review of this kind is to affirm existing strengths, identify opportunities for growth, and then re-double our commitment to continual improvement.

We retained the services of Shea Consulting Services to conduct the LIR. Shea Consulting Services has worked with Catholic schools, parishes, colleges, (arch)dioceses, and religious orders across the country.

The LIR included confidential individual interviews, focus groups, and surveys involving students, parents, alumni, benefactors, faculty, administrators, deanery pastors and principals, and support staff. These valuable interactions took place from December 2008 through February 2009.

Based on input received from school stakeholders and leaders, Shea Consulting Services submitted recommendations for review and evaluation by the school Board of Directors and administration. Most of the recommendations in the LIR Report are intended to be approved and implemented in the short term to strengthen the school's infrastructure and to improve upon the services offered to students. Other recommendations are more long-term in nature, requiring planning with regard to design, implementation, and financial resources.

*The LIR analysis and recommendations pertain to the following areas of school life:*

- Mission
- Faith Community Affairs
  - Academic Affairs
  - Student Life
  - Technology
- Roles, Procedures, and Relationships
  - Advancement
  - Governance
  - Facilities
- Business Affairs.





*The LIR identified these strengths of the school:*

- Dedication of the Board of Directors
- Strong relationships among faculty and student body
- Spirit of hope in the school community that the school is on the verge of a new beginning
  - Individualized and personalized attention to student needs
    - Enhanced academic program
    - Enthusiasm of the new President
- Willingness of the school community to engage in this review process.

The focus areas to which we will commit ourselves during the next two years include:

**Mission**

- That a process be employed to revitalize the school Mission Statement to ensure that it addresses the needs of today’s and tomorrow’s students
- That the newly revitalized Mission Statement be approved by the appropriate authorities, celebrated and marketed, and used as the lens through which all subsequent strategic planning takes place

**Faith Community Affairs**

- That the school’s Catholic identity be reinforced by all means possible internally and externally
- That the President take the lead in increasing the level of communication and contact with parish communities
- That each academic department demonstrates in writing how Catholic values are infused in every course offering
- That all faculty in-service and new teacher/staff orientation include discussion of Catholic identity and faith formation





## **Academic Affairs**

- That a review of various class scheduling models is conducted
- That a complete review of the Advanced Placement program occur and include policies and procedures
- That school administration and staff consult with elementary faculties about curriculum alignment and coordination

## **Student Life**

- That the position of Director of Student Activities be created and filled as soon as possible
- That each Student Activity sponsor or moderator enjoy an annual performance appraisal
- That the Principal hold Open Forums with each class to enhance communication and the administration's understanding of student interests
- That an ad hoc committee of parents, faculty, and students review and examine current discipline and dress code policies and practices, and make recommendations to the Principal
- That personnel be added to the Guidance Department, especially for assistance with college applications, deadlines, and other post-high school opportunities

## **Technology**

- That the Technology Department physical space be re-designed according to specifications needed for the equipment
- That a Technology Plan be included in future strategic planning, and that computer technology be given a high priority in all planning for curriculum and faculty professional development





## **Roles, Procedures, and Relationships**

- That Faculty and Student Handbooks be reviewed and updated on an annual basis
- That a facilitated role clarification process is initiated for administrators, faculty, and support staff that would result in each person clearly understanding for what he or she is responsible and to whom
- That the school organization chart be redesigned and published, and a series of educational and informational programs be introduced to ensure that all constituencies understand the appropriate roles of the school's administrators
- That a full-scale Parents' Association is organized according to normative expectations
- That student representatives participate with administrators as key stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive strategic plan
- That student governance be made an effective instrument for student advocacy
- That the Principal re-invigorate the Principal's Advisory Committee of faculty and staff
- That the President establish a President's Administrative Team and Campus Administrative Team, and that the Principal establish a Principal's Administrative Team

## **Advancement**

- That a Communications Matrix be established to ensure that all effective means continue to be used and coordinated to communicate with parents and other important constituencies
- That initiatives are created according to a plan and schedule for inviting the financial support of key constituent groups including alumni, faculty and staff, parents, past parents, Board and committees, foundations, and others
- That Advancement and public academic events be designed with greater attention to planning and detail
- That the President and Vice President for Advancement create a compelling vision for the Alumni Association in order to provide alumni with the incentive to become more actively involved in financially supporting the school





## **Advancement**

- That a formal Alumni Association be created with normative bylaws and expectations as outlined by the school's leadership
- That specific programs are designed and implemented to cultivate and inform Young Alumni
- That a Student Ambassador Program be designed and implemented to enhance freshmen admissions efforts
- That every effort is made to invite deanery pastors and principals to events that recognize their former students
- That the President's and Admissions Offices sponsor a thank you event for deanery parish and school personnel
- That an audit is conducted of the roles, policies, and procedures of the Advancement Office, and that a Development Program review is conducted by outside counsel

## **Governance**

- That the Board continues implementing an orientation program for all new members
- That the Board implements an ongoing training program and calendar for all members
- That the President consider inaugurating a President's Council of strategic advisors
- That any future strategic plan is appropriately designed and monitored by the Board

## **Facilities**

- That school representatives visit comparable schools to determine how they address short- and long-term facility needs
- That the Facilities Committee and Business Manager establish a system to identify and prioritize operational facility needs

## **Business Affairs**

- That the Business Manager, in consultation with Board and administrative leadership, develops multi-year forecasting scenarios and a multi-year financial plan that addresses program, facility, and professional development priorities
- That budget decisions effectively address the school's priorities for programs, facilities, technology, and advancement





## Conclusion

It is the clear belief of Shea Consulting Services that Scecina Memorial High School has a tradition worthy of serving students well into the 21st century. The researchers have no doubt that the school's current leadership is up to the challenge.

In the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops statement in 2005 titled, *"Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium,"* we find these words:

**"Young people are a valued treasure and the future leaders of our Church. It is the responsibility of the entire Catholic community—bishops, priests, deacons, religious, and laity—to continue to strive towards the goal of making our Catholic elementary and secondary schools available, accessible, and affordable . . . All Catholics must join together in efforts to ensure that Catholic schools have administrators and teachers who are prepared to provide an exceptional educational experience for young people. The future of Catholic school education depends on the entire Catholic community embracing wholeheartedly the concept of stewardship of time, talent, and treasure, and translating stewardship into concrete action."**

Finally, we hear these words of Pope Benedict XVI about the value of Catholic schools:

**"Education is integral to the mission of the Church. Towering figures, with great tenacity and foresight, laid the foundations of what is a remarkable network of Catholic schools. No child should be denied his or her right to an education in faith, which in turn nurtures the soul of a nation."**

*Thank you for supporting Scecina Memorial High School  
through your prayers and stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.*





**Scecina Memorial High School**  
**5000 Nowland Avenue**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana 46201**  
**317.356.6377**  
**[www.scecina.org](http://www.scecina.org)**

