



# 2013–2015 Bi-Annual Report

## *Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools*

### MISSION

*The Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools Office supports schools as they*

*Evangelize Hearts,*

*Educate Minds,*

*Encourage Talent, and*

*Embrace the Future*

*by promoting excellence in*

*faith formation,*

*academic rigor,*

*innovative programs,*

*responsible stewardship,*

*and joyful celebration of*

*service to the community.*

### VISION

*Evangelize Hearts,*

*Educate Minds,*

*Encourage Talent,*

*Embrace the Future!*

### Superintendent's Message



*Dr. Melanie B. Verges*  
*Don Kadair Photography*

Thank you for your interest in the ministry of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. This report contains information on the activities and accomplishments for 2013-14 and 2014-15. In support of schools, the Catholic Schools Office serves principals, pastors, and board members in their work, and we are grateful for the commitment of staff members who bring incredible talent and skill to that service.

Life teaches us to expect "...the best of times and the worst of times," and the past two years have been ones in which both joy and sadness were experienced. The delight of working with a volunteer task force to plan the expansion of services to families in need of special education for their children filled the diocese with hope and happiness, while the sadness of coming to a decision to close Redemptorist High School brought heartbreak to many, especially students and alumni. Through all, we trust in God's grace and are thankful for the leadership of our boards and committees that provide advice. The Gift of the Holy Spirit is evident in the generosity of spirit and goodness of the many people involved in the ministry of Catholic education!

Catholic identity remained primary in the Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic schools during the past two years. Faith knowledge, as evidenced by The Assessment of Catechesis and Religious Education (ACRE), continued to be strong, as verified by above-average scores in all domains. Additionally, schools reported almost 500,000 hours of service in conjunction with school programs. Such knowledge and action connected to faith indicates that Catholic schools *Evangelize Hearts!*

Utilizing the Rigor, Relevance & Relationship Program within accreditation guidelines, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge continually strived for improvement and involvement of staff and board members. Teachers and administrators participated in professional development, with approximately 35,000 hours of professional development coordinated through the Catholic Schools Office during the past two years. Likewise, members on diocesan and local school boards participated in professional development by attending the required orientation workshops

to improve their role as advisors and the board retreats.

As a nationally accredited district, Catholic schools collaborated within the continuous improvement cycle. Schools reviewed improvement goals annually and adjusted them based on student growth data. TerraNova test data for elementary and middle school students in the diocese continued to indicate exceptional performance and outstanding growth. For high school students, the American College Testing (ACT) results over the past five years have reflected a positive trend in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, with increased college readiness in English, mathematics, reading, and science, and the ACT results continued to be above both national and state averages. Catholic schools in our diocese certainly *Educate Minds* in service to students in their care!

School leaders recently added *Encouraging Talent* to the vision and mission for schools in the diocese to reflect the importance of developing the full potential of students. Music, art, drama, sports, clubs, and other co-curricular and extra-curricular programs have always been part of the educational programs in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. With the recent update to the mission statement, school leaders are clarifying the development of talent as a focus of the educational ministry.

The schools in our diocese are blessed to have the leadership of Bishop Robert W. Muench, who supports and celebrates the work of the schools, and priests, who nurture the ministry of education within their parishes. Always relying on the Holy Spirit, we are grateful to have had a wonderful journey for the past two years and look forward to continuing success in the future!



*Superintendent Dr. Melanie Verges, Special Education Task Force Co-Chairs Mr. Sean Casey and Dr. Carolyn Landry, and Director Mrs. Veronica Winchester attend the celebration of the expansion of the Special Education Program to various sites across the diocese*

## DIOCESE OF BATON ROUGE CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

### Baton Rouge

Most Blessed Sacrament  
Our Lady of Mercy  
Redemptorist Elementary  
Sacred Heart of Jesus  
St. Aloysius  
St. Francis Xavier  
St. George  
St. Jean Vianney  
St. Jude the Apostle  
St. Louis King of France  
St. Thomas More

### Donaldsonville

Ascension Catholic  
Elementary



*Educating the mind  
of a younger student*

## Distinguished Diocesan Educators and Pastors

### 2013 - 2014

- Mrs. Maria Cloessner – *Elementary Principal, Most Blessed Sacrament School*
- Sr. Micha DeHart, MHS – *Teacher, EA-EI Schools Partnership*
- Mrs. Linda Harvison – *Secondary Educator, St. Joseph's Academy*
- Very Reverend Vincent Dufresne – *Pastor, St. Peter Chanel School*

### 2014 - 2015

- Mrs. Bernardine Legendre – *Elementary Principal, St. John Elementary*
- Mrs. Allison Christina Chustz – *Teacher, Catholic Elementary of Pointe Coupee*
- Dr. Kevin Andry – *Secondary Educator, St. Michael the Archangel High School*

## Students of the Year

### 2013 - 2014

- Charles Roemer V, *Grade 5, Our Lady of Mercy School*
- Marigny Broussard, *Grade 8, St. Theresa of Avila School*
- Richard Tuminello, Jr., *Grade 12, St. Michael the Archangel High School*
- Audrey Marsh, *Grade 12, St. Joseph's Academy*

### 2014 - 2015

- Jonathan Beale, *Grade 5, Our Lady of Mercy School*
- Adeline Roemer, *Grade 8, Our Lady of Mercy School*
- Connor Rouillier, *Grade 12, St. Michael the Archangel High School*

## Quiz Bowl First Place

### 2013 - 2014

- Sacred Heart of Jesus School grades 7-8
- Our Lady of Mercy School grades 5-6

### 2014 - 2015

- St. Thomas More School grades 7-8
- St. Jude the Apostle School grades 5-6

## National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

### 2013 - 2014

- Most Blessed Sacrament School

### 2014 - 2015

- Catholic High School

## Catholic Schools Week

- Theme: *Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service*
- Catholic Schools Week Mass at St. Alphonsus Liguori Church (2013 – 2014) and St. Joseph Church in Paulina (2014 – 2015)

- Distinguished Educators Awards and Service Awards presented
- Distinguished Graduates Award Dinner held at Renaissance Hotel
- TV ads, billboards and appearances highlighted Catholic Schools Week activities across Diocese
- Students collected around \$14,500 each year for Catholic Charities
- Leadership Program with Our Lady of Holy Cross College
- Student art work displayed at the Catholic Life Center

## Diocesan School Board

- Supported local board development through retreats, workshops, & governance document revision
- Reviewed data on school operations and recommended policy to better serve schools, as well as the closing of Redemptorist High School
- Served on Catholic Educators Trust Fund
- Special Education Task Force formed to assess needs of special education students throughout the diocese and design programs

## Diocesan Home & School Association

- Fall General Membership Meeting
- Catholic Schools Week Mass and Distinguished Graduates Dinner
- Annual luncheon supports Mother Seton Awards program
- Support of Catholic Educators Gathering, Baton Rouge River Center
- Student of the Year recognition

## Events Coordinated by Catholic Schools Office

- Special Education Task Force finished initial plan; implementation phase for Dyslexia program, Autism program, and Down's program
- Implemented the Governor's Scholarship Program
- New Teachers enrolled in Orientation Program, three workshops
- Rigor and Relevance Workshops for teachers and administrators
- Leadership Summits in Ocean Springs, MS, and Baton Rouge, LA held for CSO staff and school administrators
- NCEA Convention in Pittsburgh, PA for teachers and school administrators (2013 – 2014)
- NCEA Convention in Orlando, FL for teachers and school administrators (2014 – 2015)
- Middle school teachers and students participated in Diocesan Robotics Workshop and Exhibition
- Held week-long Mathematics Vertical Learning Workshops for schools in the diocese
- School Law Workshop for administrators

DIOCESE OF  
BATON ROUGE  
CATHOLIC  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOLS

*Gonzales*

*St. Theresa of Avila*

*Greenwell Springs*

*St. Alphonsus Liguori*

*Hammond*

*Holy Ghost*

*Independence*

*Mater Dolorosa*

*New Roads*

*Catholic Elementary  
of Pointe Coupée*

*Paincourtville*

*St. Elizabeth  
Interparochial*

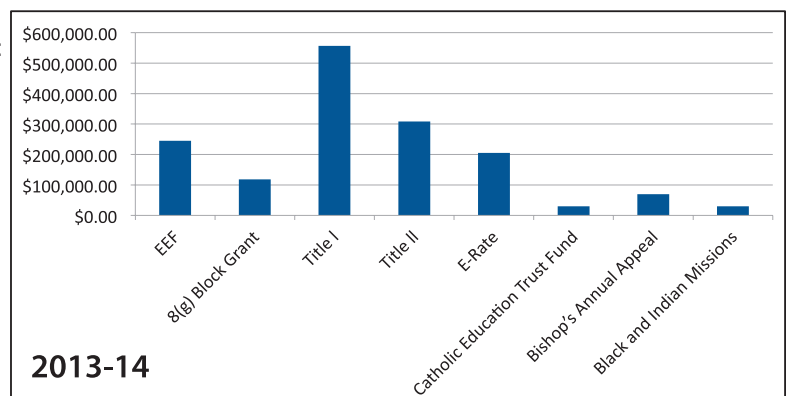


*Home and School President  
Sharron Buchart, Bishop  
Robert Muench, Keynote  
Speaker Darryl Ducote,  
and Superintendent  
Melanie Verges at the  
Mother Seton Luncheon*

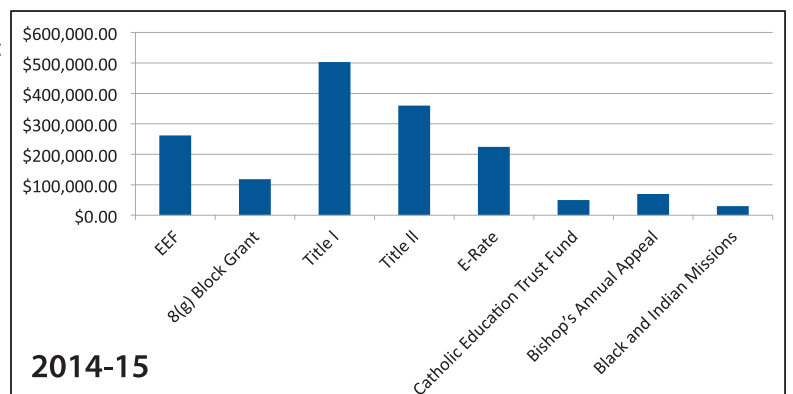
Category	Elementary		Secondary	
School Enrollment	2013 - 14	2014 - 15	2013 - 14	2014 - 15
Total Enrollment	10,972	10,954	4,230	4,075
Catholic	85%	85%	85%	85%
Non-Catholic	15%	15%	15%	15%
Caucasian	77%	83%	77%	82%
Minorities	23%	17%	23%	18%
Secondary School Graduates	2013 - 14	2014 - 15	2013 - 14	2014 - 15
Total Graduates			927	883
Reported Enrollment in College			99%	96%
Scholarships Awarded - Total			\$46,691,192	\$63,399,291
College Scholarships			\$34,296,384	\$50,938,179
TOPS			\$12,394,808	\$12,461,112
Advanced Credits			2,208	2,916
General Data	2013 - 14	2014 - 15	2013 - 14	2014 - 15
Total Professional Staff (1031)	660	664	361	362
Average Student/Teacher Ratio	16.6	16.5	11.7	11.2
Average Tuition	\$4,446	\$4,579	\$7,839	\$8,074
Service Hours	120,699	122,637	124,469	127,535

State, Federal and Diocesan Funding

- 2013-14 Diocese of Baton Rouge Received: **\$1,563,630**
  - Federal Funds: **\$1,070,211**
  - State Funds: **\$363,419**
  - Donations/Diocesan Funds: **\$130,000**
  - Reimbursements (Required Services): **\$2,900,786**



- 2014-15 Diocese of Baton Rouge Received: **\$1,617,706**
  - Federal Funds: **\$1,087,488**
  - State Funds: **\$380,218**
  - Donations/Diocesan Funds: **\$150,000**
  - Reimbursements (Required Services): **\$2,900,786**



**DIOCESE OF  
BATON ROUGE  
CATHOLIC  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOLS**

*Paulina*

*St. Peter Chanel  
Interparochial*

*Plaquemine*

*St. John the Evangelist  
Interparochial*

*Ponchatoula*

*St. Joseph*

*Port Allen*

*Holy Family*

*Prairieville*

*St. John Primary*

**High School ACT Composite Scores**

Class of:	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Diocese of Baton Rouge Average	23.2	23.4	23.6	23.6	24
State of Louisiana Average	20.2	20.3	19.5	19.2	19.4
National Average	21.1	21.1	20.9	21.0	21.0

*(State and National averages include Catholic Schools)*

**Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (ACRE)  
2013-15 Composite Scores**

Year	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 11
2013 - 2014	74	79	72
2014 - 2015	76	81	77

*(Composite Scores)*

**Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (ACRE)  
2014-15 Testing – Faith Knowledge**

Domain	Average Percentage Correct		
	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 11
Knowledge of the Faith	78	81	73
Liturgical Life	76	75	77
Moral Formation	84	88	76
Prayer	71	79	83
Communal Life	81	73	78
Missionary Spirit	62	85	78
Total	76	81	77

*(No national norms available until Fall 2015)*



*Mater Dolorosa students  
dress as their favorite saints*



*Robotics Competition Round International Games  
Hawaii 2014 Catholic High of Pointe Coupee*



*St. Michael High School students with donations for Catholic  
Schools Week*

**DIOCESE OF  
BATON ROUGE  
CATHOLIC HIGH  
SCHOOLS**

*Baton Rouge*

*Catholic High*

*Redemptorist Diocesan  
Regional High*

*St. Joseph's Academy*

*St. Michael the Archangel  
Diocesan Regional High*

*Donaldsonville*

*Ascension Catholic  
Diocesan Regional High*

*Hammond*

*St. Thomas Aquinas  
Diocesan Regional High*

*New Roads*

*Catholic High of  
Pointe Coupée*

*Plaquemine*

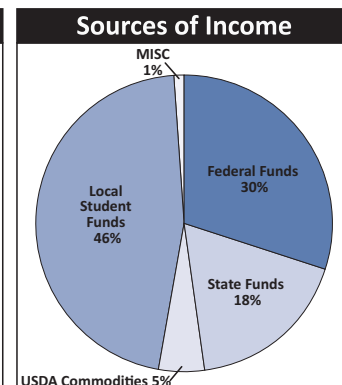
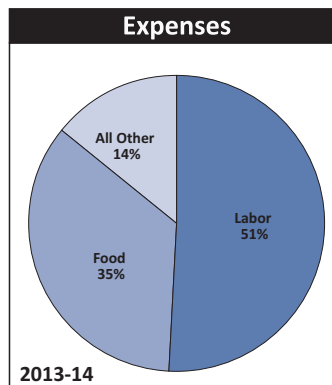
*St. John the Evangelist  
Interparochial High*



*Governor Jindal signs  
the Catholic School  
Week Proclamation with  
Superintendent  
Melanie Verges and  
Most Blessed Sacrament  
Principal Maria Cloessner*

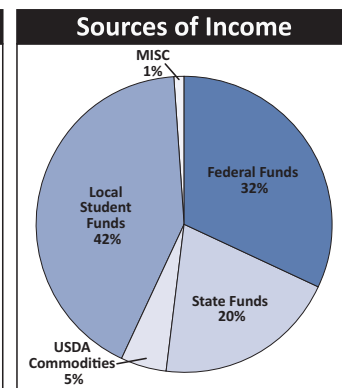
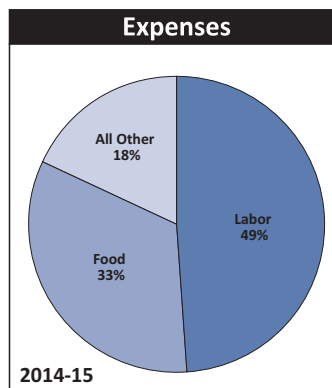
**Child Nutrition Program 2013-14 Annual Report**

- Average daily participation: **9,210**
- Students receiving free/reduced price meals: **2,585**
- Total meals served: **2,178,203**
  - Breakfast & Lunch: **\$1,584,095**
  - Afterschool: **\$594,108**
- Meal prices
  - Elementary: **\$2.75**
  - Middle: **\$2.80**
  - High School: **\$3.00**



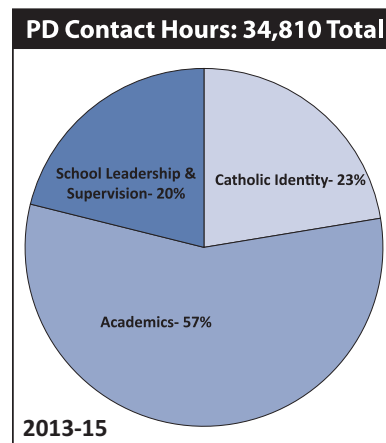
**Child Nutrition Program 2014-15 Annual Report**

- Average daily participation: **8,491**
- Students receiving free/reduced price meals: **1,823**
- Total meals served: **2,001,916**
  - Breakfast & Lunch: **\$1,460,496**
  - Afterschool: **\$541,420**
- Meal prices
  - Elementary: **\$2.80**
  - Middle: **\$2.85**
  - High School: **\$3.05**



**Catholic School Office Professional Development,  
Catholic Identity, School Leadership,  
Teaching & Learning**

Contact Hours	2013-15
Catholic Identity – Retreats & Prayer Services	7,796
Professional Development – Academics	19,665
School Leadership & Supervision	7,349
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>	<b>34,810</b>



**Diocesan Retreats**

**2013 - 2014**

- Rev. Donald Blanchard, Retired, Diocese of Baton Rouge  
*Principals and Assistant Principals Retreat*  
Theme: "Letting Jesus' Light Illuminate School Leadership"

**2014 – 2015**

- Mr. Michael Carotta, Omaha, Nebraska  
*Principals and Assistant Principals Retreat*  
Theme: "Our Journey with Christ; Sustaining the Spirit for School Leadership"

# Catholic Schools:

Preserving a Catholic tradition since 1845

## Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Baton Rouge

1800 South Acadian Thruway  
P.O. Box 2028  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Phone: (225) 336-8735  
Fax: (225) 336-8711

[www.csobr.org](http://www.csobr.org)



Bishop Muench blesses  
a St. George student  
at Communion

## Diocesan School Board Members

### 2013 – 2014

Mr. Eddie James, *Chair*  
Mr. Perry Franklin, *Vice-Chair*  
Mr. John Bennett  
Sr. Sandra Blanchard, SCJ  
Mrs. Geraldine Bordelon  
Mrs. Sharron Buchart  
Rev. Edward Chiffrieller  
Mr. Ken DeDominicis  
Mrs. Ramona Correnti  
Mr. Brent Lambert  
Mrs. Carolyn Landry  
Mrs. Donna Newchurch Landry  
Rev. Caye A. Nelson III  
Mrs. Rhonda Parenton  
Mr. Ruel Seneca  
Br. Xavier Werneth, S.C.  
Dr. Melanie B. Verges, Superintendent

### 2014 - 2015

Mr. Perry Franklin, *Chair*  
Mrs. Donna Newchurch Landry, *Vice-Chair*  
Sr. Sandra Blanchard, SCJ  
Mrs. Geraldine Bordelon  
Rev. Edward Chiffrieller  
Mr. Ken DeDominicis  
Mr. Eddie James  
Mrs. Carolyn Landry  
Rev. Caye A. Nelson III  
Mrs. Rhonda Parenton  
Mrs. Wendy Ross  
Mrs. Ashley Sandage  
Mr. Ruel Seneca  
Mrs. Renee Tullier  
Br. Xavier Werneth, S.C.  
Dr. Melanie B. Verges, Superintendent

## Diocesan Special Education Task Force Members

### 2013 – 2014

Sean Casey  
Christina Cedotal  
Maria Cloessner  
Susan Lala  
Carolyn Landry  
Dr. Melanie Lemoine  
Patricia McElroy  
Tonya Orcino  
Dr. Joyce Polk

Alison Porche  
Fr. Tom Ranzino  
Marie Rourke  
Mike Rourke  
Joseph Saffiotti  
Jill Stewart  
Renee Sumrall  
Gina Tollefson  
Brandie Wolsefer

### 2014 - 2015

Sean Casey  
Maria Cloessner  
Brady Compton  
Carolyn Landry  
Patricia McElroy  
Ellen Ratcliff  
Joe Saffiotti  
Jill Stewart  
Renee Sumrall

## Diocesan Home and School Board Members

### 2013 – 2014

Mrs. Sharron Buchart, *President*  
Mrs. Renee Tullier, *Recording Secretary*  
Mrs. Annette Savoy, *Corresponding Secretary*  
Mrs. Randi Peltier, *Treasurer*  
Mrs. Kathleen Compton, *Hospitality*  
Mrs. Sande Bardwell, *Hospitality*  
Mrs. Cindy Gautreau, *Member at Large*  
Mrs. Jennifer Bourgeois, *Member at Large*  
Mrs. Jeanne Barone, *Member at Large*  
Mrs. Veronica Winchester, *Member at Large*  
Assistant Superintendent, *Moderator*

### 2014 - 2015

Mrs. Renee Tullier, *President*  
Mrs. Jeanne Barone, *Recording Secretary*  
Mrs. Annette Savoy, *Corresponding Secretary*  
Mrs. Randi Peltier, *Treasurer*  
Mrs. Kathleen Compton, *Hospitality*  
Mrs. Sande Bardwell, *Hospitality*  
Mrs. Cindy Gautreau, *Member at Large*  
Mrs. Jennifer Bourgeois, *Member at Large*  
Mrs. Sharron Buchart, *Past President*  
Mr. Michael Miller, *Moderator*

## Catholic Schools Office Staff

### 2013 – 2014

Dr. Melanie B. Verges, *Superintendent*  
Dr. Connie Urbanski, *Assistant Superintendent*  
Ms. Nancy Heine, *Technology Coordinator*  
Ms. Linda Rausch, *Curriculum & Instruction Specialist*  
Mrs. Kerry Rogers, *Curriculum & Instruction Specialist*  
Mrs. Susan Steele, *Secretary*  
Mrs. Alice Faucheux, *Secretary*

### 2014 - 2015

Dr. Melanie B. Verges, *Superintendent*  
Mr. Michael Miller, *Assistant Superintendent*  
Mrs. Michelle DeMeulenaere, *Instruction Specialist*  
Ms. Linda Rausch, *Curriculum Specialist*  
Mrs. Stacey Webb, *Secretary*  
Mrs. Susan Steele, *Secretary*  
Mrs. Joni Herrmann

## Special Education Staff

### 2013 – 2014

Dr. Connie Urbanski, *Administrator*  
Mrs. Kerry Rogers, *Learning Coordinator*  
Ms. Aloma Dias, *Secretary*

### 2014 - 2015

Mrs. Veronica Winchester, *Director*  
Ms. Aloma Dias, *Secretary*

## Child Nutrition Program Staff

### 2013 – 2014

Ms. Lynda Carville, *Child Nutrition Supervisor*  
Mrs. Anne Peterson, *Business Manager*  
Mrs. Cristal Willis, *Accounts Payable*  
Mrs. Terry Deville, *Accountant*  
Mrs. Terry Pennison, *Payroll Benefits Manager*  
Ms. Chiquita Coston, *Secretary*  
Mrs. Annette Dinecola, *Bookkeeper*  
Mrs. Hermione Pate, *Receptionist*  
Mrs. Holly Leonards, *Purchasing Manager*

### 2014 - 2015

Ms. Lynda Carville, *Child Nutrition Supervisor*  
Mrs. Anne Peterson, *Business Manager*  
Mrs. Cristal Willis, *Accounts Payable*  
Mrs. Terry Deville, *Accountant*  
Mrs. Terry Pennison, *Payroll Benefits Manager*  
Ms. Chiquita Coston, *Secretary*  
Mrs. Annette Dinecola, *Bookkeeper*  
Mrs. Hermione Pate, *Receptionist*  
Mrs. Holly Leonards, *Purchasing Manager*