



**ARCHBISHOP  
STEPINAC  
HIGH SCHOOL**

# FOCUSED FORWARD

**STRATEGIC PLAN >> 2024 - 2028**



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# Dear Families, Students and Community Members,

## **What an incredibly important mission we have:**

1. To educate hundreds of young lives in motion.
2. To, in four quick years, give each adolescent we welcome into Stepinac the intellectual, moral and social strength he needs to graduate as a young man of potential and promise.
3. To guide each forward.

Achieving enduring success in our endeavor, year after year, decade upon decade, requires Stepinac must always be true to our unique DNA, aligned with values we hold as fundamental and timeless and, at the same time, be adaptable and flexible, open and responsive to a dynamic, changing world.

## **“What’s next?”**

was often asked last year when Stepinac celebrated our 75th anniversary.

## **What’s next is Stepinac Focused Forward.**

This strategic plan is the result of a months-long, community wide effort.

**We set out to create a clear  
and ambitious three-year  
roadmap of what’s next in  
five institutional pillars:**

- ⋮ Catholic Mission
- ⋮ Student Experiences
- ⋮ Teaching and Leading
- ⋮ Function and Facilities
- ⋮ Connection and Communication

# Archbishop Stepinac Strategic Plan Committee Members

**Kevin Keane '74** :: Board Chair

**Father Thomas Collins '79** :: President

**Paul Carty** :: Principal

**Frank Portanova '93** :: Vice Principal

**Michael O'Donnell** :: Director of Athletics

**Keith Sunderland '94** :: Director of Admissions

**Joseph Lore '02** :: Director of Special Projects

**Patrick Massaroni '06** :: Vice President for Institutional Advancement

**Kevin Agee '94** :: Director of Learning Services

**Patricia Murphy** :: Director of Instructional Technology

**Maria Buda** :: Director of College Counseling

**Casey Helber** :: Social Worker

**Joseph DeBona '94** :: Admissions Committee Chair

**Noelia Pozo** :: Foreign Language Department Chair

**Maggie Kolman Mandle** :: Marketing Committee Chair

**Dr. Todd Maguire** :: Director of Operations

**Samantha Hanley P'24**

# PROCESS

In the fall of 2023, the Stepinac Board of Trustees approved the development of a new strategic plan. Staff and volunteers were asked to study nine focus areas through subcommittee work.

- » Catholic Identity
- » Facility/Campus
- » Admissions
- » Academics
- » Extracurriculars
- » Faculty/Staff
- » Advancement
- » Communications
- » Counseling

From November through January, committees benchmarked current performance and looked beyond Stepinac for new ideas and practices. In February and March, the entire Stepinac community was asked for their input through interviews, focus groups, and e-surveys.

Focused Forward, the new Stepinac Strategic Plan, took shape in bi-weekly meetings through the spring of 2024. The board approved the final plan in July.

STEPINAC STAKEHOLDER	ENGAGEMENT
Parents	69
Faculty/Staff	50
Alumni	38
Students	255
TOTAL	412

“

Stepinac enables students to be the *best version* of themselves while bringing others up with them.

∴ TYLER MORONI '25

# OUR MISSION

As a standard-bearer in curriculum innovation, Archbishop Stepinac High School provides young men with a highly competitive academic program that leverages our blended learning platforms and project-based learning pedagogy to equip students with skills to become globally competitive.

Students are provided a diverse range of extra-curricular programs that foster diversity, as well as social, emotional and spiritual growth based on solid Roman Catholic, societal and moral values inspired by Blessed Aloysius Stepinac. It is our goal that Stepinac students will become responsible and ethical leaders in society. To this end, the faculty and staff provide them with tools needed for post-secondary success as well as instill in them the lifelong desire to lead through service.

Students are challenged to realize their full potential, in an ever-changing world, through a supportive and inspiring atmosphere which imbues a strong sense of camaraderie that is unique to the Stepinac experience.



# WE BELIEVE

Education is the shared responsibility of the school, the administration, student, family, and community.

- » A spirit of Catholicism should permeate the entire curriculum. An integral education develops the whole person –spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically.
- » Developing self-discipline encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning while recognizing that diverse and unique learning styles compel Stepinac to continue to develop differentiated methods of instruction.
- » Each student is an individual with unique learning styles and rates of learning. Interaction with individuals of diverse backgrounds and abilities teaches respect and appreciation for others.
- » Through the opportunity to participate in diverse extracurricular activities, our students develop a sense of family.
- » All students should have a safe learning environment to foster personal growth. Health and wellness provide the necessary framework for success throughout the students' academic and professional lives.
- » All students should be proficient and responsible in the technologies and abilities needed to become globally competitive.

# VISION STATEMENT

Archbishop Stepinac High School prepares students to become responsible, ethical leaders in society who are globally competitive and successful in the future.

**The school's mission is to provide students with the tools they need for college and career success and to instill a lifelong desire to lead through service.**

- » Be a leader in curriculum innovation and build on the school's reputation for preparing students to compete globally.
- » Provide authentic real world learning experiences that help students develop career awareness and readiness.
- » Develop programs to address the needs of at-risk students.
- » Develop the whole person: spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically.
- » Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.
- » Help students develop a sense of belonging to the Stepinac community of faith.
- » Develop students with a sense of Christian values that will refine their character, personality, and devotion to God, the Church, and the community.
- » Help each student fulfill their own intellectual potential.

A theory of action is a logical chain of reasoning that connects intended actions to desired outcomes. It can be used to explain how change can lead to better practices, or to outline an organization's assumptions about what will lead to long-term success.

## STEPINAC'S THEORY OF ACTION

Through communication systems, aligned curricula, innovative leadership, service learning and shared Christian values, we will challenge our Stepinac community to become active, contributing citizens to society.





**PILLAR #1**

# CATHOLIC MISSION



Just as the Gospel of Matthew states, the golden rule is the way of life. “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you.” This will serve as the cornerstone of our code of conduct for Stepinac student life.



## CATHOLIC MISSION

“

Being at Stepinac has given me the chance to grow closer to *God and my faith*. From school-wide liturgies to the religion classes to service opportunities, I have learned more about God here than I ever have before. The morning prayers make me ready for the day, and the religious atmosphere always makes me feel at home.

∴ LIAM FELIPE '25

## GOAL

## OUTCOME

**Establish a  
new code  
of conduct**

Honors Academy and Student Government to create the new code of conduct in conjunction with Dean of Students.

Dean's office to recognize those who follow and reinforce the code.

School to make the code visible to the greater Stepinac community through admissions, announcements, classrooms and school publications.

**Enrich  
Religious  
Education**

Faculty to create Independent study courses for Honors Academy students.

Religion classes to focus on the way of the mass and practice of Catholicism.

Students to become more involved in the celebration of The Mass.

**Foster  
Student  
Charity**

Campus Ministry to increase awareness and participation by offering and establishing more community service opportunities and make them visible to the Stepinac community.

Campus Ministry to seek opportunities to work with other schools.

Campus ministry to publish calendar of events, drives, and community service opportunities.

Faculty to engage in leading community service with students.





**PILLAR #2**

# STUDENT EXPERIENCE



We are extremely proud that many view Stepinac as a “real world” high school, and we will strive to fill each incoming class with students who have diverse career interests but are ready to aim in one direction: **forward.**

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

### GOAL

**Aim for a student body that works to meet the mission of the school**

### OUTCOME

Determine student capacity through a study of space, instructional and non instructional costs, financial capability and financial aid.

Conduct and implement entrance assessment for potential students.

Increase applicant pool by expanding recruitment territory.

Increase retention rates by identifying issues that lead to transfers.

Increase contacts through facility users.

Collect and analyze data to inform admission and marketing strategies.

**Balance academics by design, outcomes, and recognition**

Implement a UDL (Universal Design for Learning) framework for all academic disciplines and domains to ensure all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities.

Implement additional enrichment programming in all core disciplines to reach all students.

Increase classroom observations to identify model teacher performance.

Expand Learning Specialist role to include co-teaching and scaffolded instruction.

Grow the internship program.

Increase students graduating with Bloomberg Certification.

Seek and obtain accreditation from NYSAIS.

Revise and expand the Stepinac Course Catalogue.

“

My time at Stepinac has allowed me to harness my *leadership capabilities* through high-level finance projects. Tools, like the Bloomberg terminals, have given me a heightened understanding of the financial markets needed to complete these projects.

∴ IAN O'BRIEN '25

## GOAL

## OUTCOME

**Create, implement, and promote more robust and diversified activities**

Create a fall club recruitment fair, encouraging all students to participate.

Implement a schedule and transportation to accommodate all students.

Start new club festivals where students can promote their interests/activities.

Have clubs involved in Stepping Out Day and Back to School Night.

Begin an end of the year goal report by all clubs.

**Improve academic outcomes, attendance and college/ career readiness for all students**

Counselors will establish and maintain personalized relationships with students and families.

Counselors will support students as they navigate the Stepinac experience by facilitating communication with the student's teachers, administrators, coaches, and family.

Counselors, learning specialists, and social worker will prioritize the student social emotional well-being providing emotional support and making referrals when necessary.

Faculty and Staff will stay current with trends in post high school planning with the goal of best preparing students for college and career.



**PILLAR #3**

# TEACHING & LEADING



We will recruit and retain a talented, seasoned and versatile faculty and staff committed to providing the best secondary experience for each Stepinac student focused on high achievement, development of essential skills, and the social emotional stability to transition to the real world.

## TEACHING & LEADING



All the teachers at Stepinac form *strong bonds* with each of the students in every class. Like one of my teachers said: “No one is allowed to hide in anyone’s shadow.” She recognized my potential as a leader. I am currently the president of a student run club: The Investment Club.

∴ **PETER PADILLA '25**

## GOAL

**Increase compensation to reduce turnover and reward excellence**

## OUTCOME

Increase compensation over three years comenserate with faculty tenure, education, and merit.

**Support all teachers for success in the classroom**

Develop a new mentorship program for first and second year teachers, including regular meetings with their department chairpersons and extra guidance as issues arise.

**Strengthen professional development, especially in new technologies**

Encourage faculty and staff to seek external professional development through grants from the Parent Associations or Stepinac Foundation.

After attending external professional development, share knowledge and application to Stepinac curriculum.

Launch a new committee to develop a protocol for AI at Stepinac: how to harness and use this technology while preserving scholarship.







**PILLAR #4**

# FUNCTION & FACILITY



Stepinac will continue to focus on building a safe and robust campus for faculty, staff, students and the community by providing state-of-the-art resources and learning spaces.

## FUNCTION & FACILITY



The *technology* available to me in the new Health Science Hub provides me with an in depth look at different body systems, healthcare strategies, and biological functions which will give me a competitive edge going into college.

∴ JAMES LYONS '25

## GOAL

## OUTCOME

**Create and implement a 3-year comprehensive facility plan**

Identify and prioritize critical needs throughout the building and campus.

Set new, higher maintenance standards.

Continue to address heating system performance.

Map out all initiatives and budgets.

**Improve, expand and enforce better campus security**

Create a task committee with the Dean's office and administration to review the current security plans.

Generate a security report to detail proposed camera and cyber security systems and training.

Maintain annual training for fire drills, lock down drills and all emergency response for faculty and staff.

**Continue renovations to provide the most advanced academic settings and resources**

Convert all original classrooms into active learning centers.

Continually improve other spaces per the facility plan.

**Create and implement a 3-year information management plan**

Identify opportunities for new efficiencies with Business, Admissions, Advancement, and Academics.

Create a plan and budget to implement with training.



**PILLAR #5**

# CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION »

We will effectively communicate the need to invest in the future leaders of tomorrow with the entire Stepinac community as well as the greater community and those interested in the school's mission and vision in preparing our Crusaders for the world ahead of them.

## CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION



My experience in Stepinac's peer mentoring program, whose focus is to make high school an easier experience for freshmen, has taught me how to *lead and responsibly guide* underclassmen who look to me for guidance.

∴ **VINCENT GOODRICH '25**

## GOAL

**Communicate  
that Stepinac  
is a leader -  
focused forward  
- in many  
dimensions**

## OUTCOME

Create and implement a communication plan that involves all communities at Stepinac (faculty, alumni, students, parents) to help foster a cohesive and unified brand identity and message delivery.

Launch a revamped website which conveys to the entire Stepinac community as well as the community at large, who Stepinac is and what it stands for.

Unify the message on all Stepinac social media through guidelines and oversight.

Promote Stepinac's Catholic identity and action through all communications.

Utilize consultants, faculty, and parents and then develop the professional communications department.

**Through  
a robust  
advancement  
plan, increase  
community  
awareness and  
participation  
in the annual  
engagement  
and giving  
initiatives**

Create a fall club recruitment fair, encouraging all students to participate.

Adopt best practices in information management to improve efficiencies, results, and reporting.

Initiate new annual giving programs and engagement activities that will educate and orient the Stepinac community (or all constituencies) of the purpose, activity, and outcomes of the Advancement Office.

Improve the stewardship of all donors through a detailed plan for consistent outreach which includes an annual report of donors (or Impact Report).

Enhance the alumni engagement program to include a reunion plan with a focus on participation, and a career networking group as well as various affinity groups.

Build the Advancement team to match Stepinac's philanthropic potential.

Prioritize professional development to ensure advancement staff is educated in the best practices and trends in the industry.

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