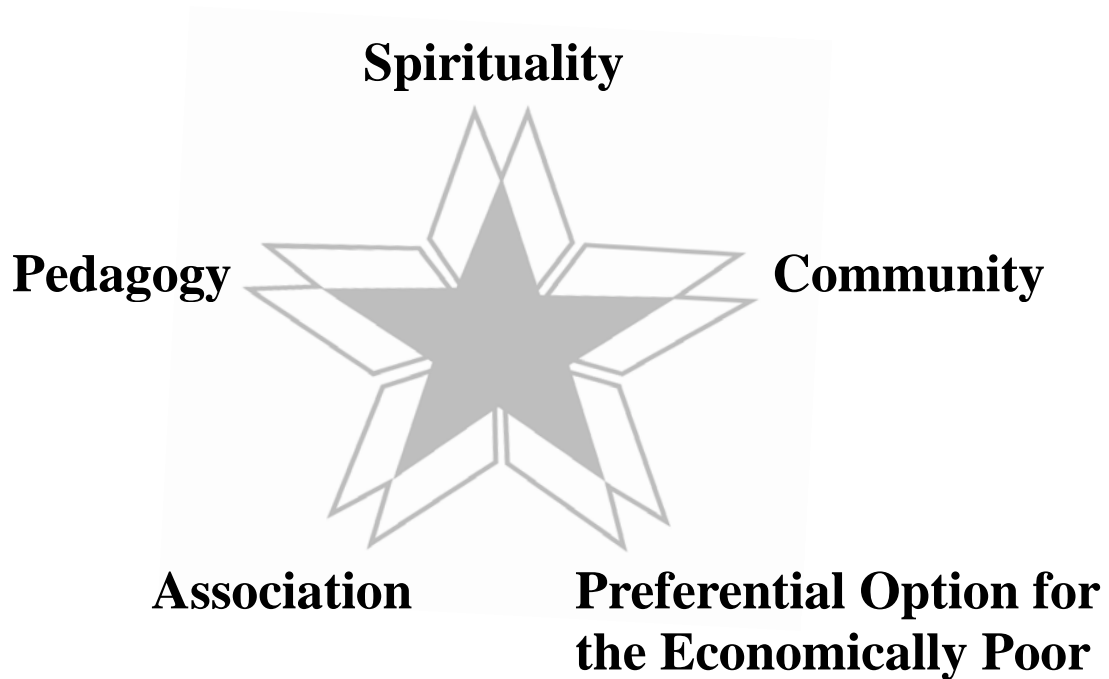


“Strengthening Our Lasallian Charism through Ministry Culture”

Lasallian Self-Study and District Assessment Process for Ministry Improvement

Workbook



Brothers of the Christian Schools
Ministries of the Midwest District

Ministry Association and Assessment Committee

Brother Mark Snodgrass, FSC, Chairperson
Tina Bonacci
Roxanne Eubank, Ed.D.
Patricia Freire
David Hotek
Barry Lieske, AFSC
Jeanette Mines, Ph.D.
Tad Smith



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Rationale

The *Lasallian Self-Study and District Assessment Process* is guided by the vision and traditions of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, founder of the De La Salle Christian Brothers. We are committed to constant improvement to better serve the needs of the Lasallian family. We are networked together to learn from one another. Lasallian ministries are Catholic ministries, based on core principles that characterize them as uniquely *Lasallian*. Given the diversity of the works of the Midwest District, in the context of this document, ministry is used as an inclusive term to mean universities, high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, educational outreach centers, retreat centers, and publishing companies. Ministry in this context is defined as educational service to others. Their educational policies are centered on the young, designed to prepare them to take their place in society, and characterized by the determination to make the means of salvation available through a quality education and by an explicit proclamation of Jesus Christ. “Lasallian [ministries] are transparently Catholic, in order to be, as the rule of the Brothers states, signs of the kingdom and means of salvation. Their Christian identity involves more than courses of religious instruction and pastoral programs. The Christian dimension permeates and shapes every aspect of [ministry] life; tone, atmosphere, spirit, signs, symbols, relationships, curriculum, requirements, policies, regulations. As Catholic [ministries], they are called to propose – but in no way impose – Jesus Christ, accepting with love and respect all the young people entrusted to their care, whatever their religious beliefs. An institution can legitimately call itself Lasallian only if it is unambiguously Christian.” (*Lasallian Schools Today*, Br. John Johnston, FSC, Superior General, 1994).

The *Lasallian Self-Study and District Assessment Process* is a response to the directions set by the 43rd General Chapter and the Mission Congress 2008. It incorporates a vision of the Catholic and Lasallian character of the ministry within an assessment and review process designed to identify strengths and target areas for growth. The focus of the assessment process is to build on the strengths within the ministry, affirming and encouraging efforts to live out the Catholic and Lasallian character in all aspects of the ministry’s life. The *Lasallian Self-Study and District Assessment Process* seeks to fulfill several important purposes:

- To provide for an internal review and self-assessment of the ministry, as well as an external, objective assessment
- To serve as a source of encouragement and positive reinforcement for the good taking place within the ministry
- To identify critical needs and issues and assist the ministry in creating and implementing a multi-year growth plan that addresses those critical needs and issues
- To assess how the ministry contributes to the educational service of the poor

Focus: A Lasallian Ministry Culture

The focus of the Self-Study and District Assessment is to view the Lasallian mission and qualities through the lens of ministry culture. *How does the Catholic Lasallian spirit and mission permeate all aspects of the ministry and create a distinctive identity within the ministry community?* Culture is a set of values, beliefs, common understanding, thinking and norms for behavior that are shared by all members of the ministry. Ministry culture is defined by the presence of a set of norms and values that focuses everyone's attention on what is most important and motivates them to work toward a common purpose. Ministry culture is the primary communicator of the Lasallian mission and values. Students/clients and faculty/staff alike are absorbed into the spirit and values of the ministry's culture.

There are five main elements of a ministry's culture:

1. a shared sense of purpose and vision
2. norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions
3. rituals, traditions, and ceremonies
4. history and stories
5. architecture, artifacts, and symbols

A ministry's culture stems from its vision and its established values. But whether the culture is strong or weak depends on the actions, traditions, symbols, ceremonies, and rituals that are closely aligned with that vision. Effective ministries make sure that even the smallest aspects of daily activities are aligned with the purpose, vision, and values of the ministry. When the alignment is tight and the culture is strong, everyone picks up on the ministry's true vision and values.

A strong, positive culture serves several beneficial functions, including the following:

- fostering effort and productivity
- improving collegial and collaborative activities that in turn promote better communication and problem solving
- supporting successful change and improvement efforts
- building commitment and helping students/clients and faculty/staff identify with the ministry
- amplifying energy and motivation of faculty/staff members and students/clients
- focusing attention and daily behavior on what is important and valued

Lasallian Characteristics

The content for the Self-Study and District Assessment process is developed around five Lasallian characteristics and indicators that give specificity to the characteristics. The Lasallian Self-Study and District Assessment Process will help the ministry examine how the five characteristics permeate the entire life (culture) of the ministry.

Characteristic One: The ministry embraces Lasallian spirituality.

We believe in the living presence of God in our students/clients, our community, and our world.

Characteristic Two: The ministry integrates Lasallian pedagogy.

We teach students/clients rather than subjects, “touch hearts”, and provide a “human and Christian education” in order for all to achieve success.

Characteristic Three: The ministry builds community.

We welcome all members of the community and show reverence for each individual.

Characteristic Four: The ministry practices and promotes Lasallian Association for Mission.

We work “together and by association” to support and further the Lasallian mission.
We build institutional and personal relationships across ministries and geography.

Characteristic Five: The ministry provides a preferential option for the economically poor.

We provide places at our ministry for the economically poor.
We serve and advocate for those suffering from injustice.

Self-Study Benefits

- Discovering the extent to which the Catholic Lasallian vision and values permeate the culture of the ministry and influence the programs and practices of the ministry community.
- Clarifying and deepening the mission of the ministry – its core values.
- Fostering greater involvement and ownership for the Lasallian mission among everyone in the ministry community.
- Insuring alignment between the Lasallian vision and values and the culture of the ministry – programs and practices.
- Enhancing the ability of the ministry to adapt to changing needs by creating innovations – new programs and practices – to live its mission into the future.
- Strengthening the capacity of the ministry for embedding the Lasallian charism in the culture and people of the ministry.

District Assessment Process

The Lasallian Mission Council of the Midwest District, which oversees this process through its Ministry Association and Assessment Committee (MAA), assists and supports the Brother Visitor in the exercise of his duties with respect to the Lasallian educational mission of the ministries of the Midwest District. The Self-Study and District Assessment Process is designed to be completed over the course of four to six months of normal operations.

The local Lasallian Assessment Team will consist of the Chief Administrator, the ministry's Lasallian Animator, and others as appropriate.

The Visiting Team will consist of a chairperson (appointed by the MAA) and two members selected by the chairperson and the local ministry at the start of the process from the approved list provided by the Ministry Association and Assessment Committee. Visiting Team members will generally be selected from the geographic area to keep costs to a minimum.

1. The Lasallian Assessment Team will schedule the Lasallian Self-Study and District Assessment Process for each ministry every five years.
2. Each ministry will establish an ongoing local Lasallian Assessment Team.
3. The Ministry Association and Assessment Committee (MAA) will appoint a Visiting Team Chair who has previously participated on a Visiting Team who will be available for consultation throughout the process.
4. The ministry will conduct its self-study, led by the local Lasallian Assessment Team, creating a summary profile and five year growth plan.
5. A two day site visit by the Visiting Team will review the self-study and provide formative feedback on the first draft of the growth plan.
6. The Visiting Team will conduct an exit interview with the local Lasallian Assessment Team at which the draft of the assessment report including a rating on each rubric will be discussed and any recommendations regarding the ministry's growth plan will be presented. The local Lasallian Assessment Team will be invited to respond to the report and offer additional input to assist the Visiting Team in drafting its final report.
7. Within two weeks of the exit interview, the Visiting Team will create a final draft of the report to be shared with the local ministry for its review and comment.
8. The local Lasallian Assessment Team will develop a final version of the ministry growth plan and submit it to the Visiting Team Chair within one month of the visit.
9. Upon receipt, the Visiting Team Chair will submit the final report and the growth plan to the Ministry Association and Assessment Committee at MAA@CBMidwest.org.
10. At their first meeting after the site visit, the MAA will review the Visiting Team report and the ministry's growth plan and send a written response to the Chief Administrator.
11. By October 15 of the year following the visit and each year thereafter, a progress report of the growth plan will be submitted to MAA@CBMidwest.org.
12. Following the January meeting of the Lasallian Mission Council, the MAA will respond to the ministry progress report.

Self-Study

1. Prior to the self-study, the visiting chairperson and the local administration will communicate to begin the process.
2. The local Lasallian Assessment Team will present to its stakeholders an overview of the self-study process, its purpose and benefits, and the process to be followed for its completion.
3. All primary stakeholders will have an opportunity to participate in the Self-Study Process.
4. Work groups reflecting a balance by disciplines, gender, years of experience, position in ministry, etc. will be created.
5. Each work group may be assigned one or more Lasallian Characteristics to examine in depth during the first stage of the self-study.
6. Each work group will collect data from the larger ministry community through some combination of surveys, observation, focus groups, and interviews in order to compile an initial report of the ministry's exemplary practices and practices to improve.
7. The work groups will share their initial reports with the primary stakeholders to get their reactions and input. Each initial report will be revised to reflect the response of the larger group.
8. The final report prepared by each work group will be given to the local Lasallian Assessment Team to incorporate into the summary profile.

Summary Profile and Growth Plan

1. The local Lasallian Assessment Team will create an initial draft of the summary profile to share with the Chairperson of the Visiting Team. The profile will include a ministry history, demographics, cost per student/client, cost to student/client (fees, tuition,...), a financial aid summary, other costs per student/client (advancement, food service, extracurriculars), exemplary ministry practices, and the practices to improve, as identified through the self-study.
2. The local Lasallian Assessment Team will use the input of the Chairperson of the Visiting Team to develop the final draft of the summary profile.
3. Using the summary profile as a guide, the Lasallian Assessment Team will create the first draft of the ministry five year growth plan.
4. The summary profile and growth plan draft will be sent to the Visiting Team Chairperson and MAA@CBMidwest.org at least 2 weeks before the scheduled visit. The Visiting Team Chairperson will forward it the Visiting Team.

Assessment Team Visit

1. In a conference call one week prior to the visit, the local Lasallian Assessment Team and the Chairperson of the Visiting Team will finalize the schedule for the ministry visit.
2. On the first day of the visit, the team will obtain first hand knowledge of best practices and areas for growth by observing the ministry in action, and conducting personal interviews and focus groups with students/clients, faculty, staff, board members, parents, and administrators. The team will be given opportunities to interact with individuals and groups organized by the local Lasallian Assessment Team as well as individuals and groups selected at random. That afternoon and evening, the Visiting Team will develop its initial report.
3. The Visiting Team will meet with the local Lasallian Assessment Team the second day of the visit to distribute copies of the initial report, share the findings of the visit, and make recommendations for the refinement of the growth plan. This meeting will also provide an opportunity for the local Lasallian Assessment Team to discuss priorities and obstacles to implementation.
4. The Visiting Team will write its final report and send it to the local Lasallian Assessment Team within two weeks of the visit. The Lasallian Assessment Team will finalize its growth plan and send it to the Visiting Team Chair within one month of the Team Visit.
5. Upon receipt of the growth plan, the Visiting Team Chair will send the Visiting Team Report and the ministry's growth plan to the Ministry Association and Assessment Committee at MAA@CBMidwest.org
6. Completion of each portion of the process will be tracked at the District Office and communicated to the Ministry Association and Assessment Committee. The committee designee will contact the appropriate person if any deadline is not met.
7. The Summary Profile, Visiting Team Report and Ministry Growth Plan will be posted on Central Desktop for review by the Ministry Association and Assessment Committee.

Ministry Association and Assessment Committee Review

1. The Ministry Association and Assessment Committee (MAA) will review the Visiting Team Report and the ministry's growth plan and send a written response to the local Lasallian Assessment Team within two months after the Team Visit.
2. By October 15th of the following year and each year thereafter, the local Lasallian Assessment Team will submit a progress report to the MAA.
3. The annual reports will be reviewed by the MAA and a response will be sent to the local Lasallian Assessment Team by December 15th.
4. At the January and June meetings of the Lasallian Mission Council, the MAA will give a report summarizing the progress on assessment during the period since the last meeting.

Characteristic One:

The ministry embraces Lasallian spirituality.

Indicators:

- Practices Lasallian spirituality with intentionality.
- Recognizes teaching as a vocation/ministry/call.
- Demonstrates a spirit of faith and zeal in all that they do.

Exemplary Ministry Practices

Review the examples listed for this Indicator. Think of the ways your ministry practices this Indicator based on your own observation and experience. Write all of the practices your ministry utilizes to implement this Indicator, including the ones listed in this booklet. Then, place a ★ next to those practices that you consider your ministry's best or exemplary practices.

Practices to Improve

What are one or two practices you would like to see your ministry improve in the next several years—practices that the ministry needs to do more of or that the ministry needs to initiate? What are one or two practices you would like to see your ministry eliminate or stop doing?

Characteristic Two:

The ministry integrates Lasallian pedagogy.

Indicators:

- Strives to "touch hearts".
- Provides student/client centered education.
- Acts as older "brothers" and "sisters" to their students/clients.
- Focuses on practical education.
- Integrates spiritual and faith formation into their academic program(s).
- Embraces high standards of excellence for each student/client.
- Shares responsibility for the educational mission by engaging all stakeholders in the collaborative planning process.

Exemplary Ministry Practices

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Characteristic Three:

The ministry builds community.

Indicators:

- Creates a welcoming, safe and caring environment.
- Creates community among internal and external stakeholders.
- Treats all with respect and dignity.
- Embraces dialog and respects individual differences within the community.
- Attracts and maintains diversity.

Exemplary Ministry Practices

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What are one or two practices you would like to see your ministry improve in the next several years—practices that the ministry needs to do more of or that the ministry needs to initiate? What are one or two practices you would like to see your ministry eliminate or stop doing?

Characteristic Four:

The ministry practices and promotes Lasallian Association for Mission.

Indicators:

- Works “together”
- Works “by association”
- Provides ongoing Lasallian formation for all stakeholders

Exemplary Ministry Practices

Review the examples listed for this Indicator. Think of the ways your ministry practices this Indicator based on your own observation and experience. Write all of the practices your ministry utilizes to implement this Indicator, including the ones listed in this booklet. Then, place a ★ next to those practices that you consider your ministry’s best or exemplary practices.

Practices to Improve

What are one or two practices you would like to see your ministry improve in the next several years—practices that the ministry needs to do more of or that the ministry needs to initiate? What are one or two practices you would like to see your ministry eliminate or stop doing?

Characteristic Five:

The ministry provides a preferential option for the economically poor.

Indicators:

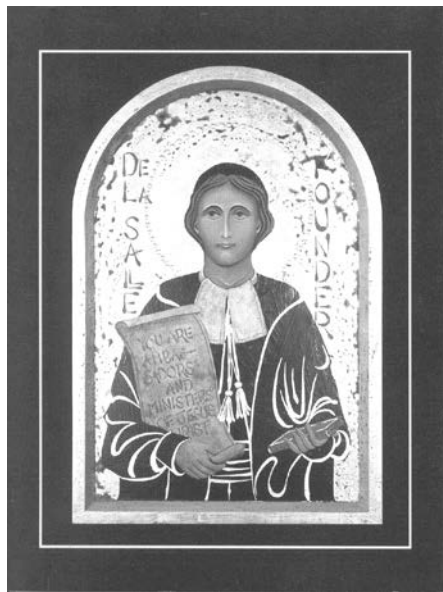
- Is guided by and promotes Catholic social teaching.
- Sensitizes stakeholders, clients and students to the needs of the economically poor.
- Considers the needs of the economically poor in decision making process on all levels.
- Is accessible and provides service to the economically poor.

Exemplary Ministry Practices

Review the examples listed for this Indicator. Think of the ways your ministry practices this Indicator based on your own observation and experience. Write all of the practices your ministry utilizes to implement this Indicator, including the ones listed in this booklet. Then, place a ★ next to those practices that you consider your ministry's best or exemplary practices.

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Name of Ministry
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

Phone
Fax

Website
E-Mail Address