

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

10.2: *Financial plans include agreed-upon levels of financial investment determined by the partners involved who may include but are not limited to parishes, diocese, religious orders, educational foundations, the larger Catholic community, and responsible boards.*

I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?

Benchmark 10.2 is about finding and establishing partners to be committed to the school and willing to provide financial investments. Identifying these partners and developing formal shared agreements regarding the levels of involvement and the levels of corresponding financial assistance is the expectation of this benchmark.

II. As a review team member, what evidence do I look for?

These are some questions which will help to frame this item:

- Is there a current list of partners, delineating their relationship to the school?
- Is there a list of partners that have not been cultivated but are under review as probable or possible partners?
- What are the sources of current revenue? What revenue do partners contribute?
- Are there signed formal agreements between the partners acknowledging the level and type of support beyond tuition?
- What are the different types and levels of revenue beyond tuition?
- Is there evidence of successful fundraising and what are the roles of the partners in these efforts?
- Is the school or parish a recipient or partial recipient of endowments?
- Does planned giving at the parish, partner parish or diocesan level or other partner levels contribute to the revenue for the school?
- What other sources of revenue exist?

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III. What are the key differences between the levels of the rubric?

At level **3-Fully meets Benchmark,**

financial plans specify specific levels of financial investments and identify the different partners as their contributions relate to these investments.

At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark,**

financial plans have diverse investments so that the assets are not all in one type of investment and the plans depend upon multiple partners, with designated expectations.

At level **2-Partially Meets Benchmark,**

the plan has been developed; however, not all resources have been committed. There are no formal agreements; the partnerships are based on a handshake or other informal arrangements.

At level **1-Does Not Meet Benchmark,**

the plan does not exist or the plan is not diverse and relies on only one or two revenue sources, such as parish contribution and tuition. Partnerships are not part of the financial plan.

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IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

To move from level 1 to level 2,

- Broaden the plan to include more sources of revenue.
- Establish the potential to secure partners.

To move from level 2 to level 3,

- Identify partner and begin to utilize partners as source of revenue and talent.
- Contact and seek commitments from multiple sources.
- Formalize the agreements with all partners and sources.

To move from level 3 to 4,

- Look for more partners and opportunities beyond current commitments.
- Diversify assets through diversification of partnerships and new sources.
- Recognize alternative sources not traditionally approached to partner with catholic schools.

V. What are key terms for understanding? (Refer to NSBECS Glossary for terms listed below.)

Educational foundations