

Revising of the Vocation Guide

As we continuing forming a new District, we are aware that practices and documents exist in the two Districts we are built on. The one existing written document guiding Vocation Ministry is what follows. It was a “Chapter Act” for the SF District. As we look toward the first District Chapter for San Francisco New Orleans, there will be a number of topics that will need to be addressed and potentially formed into Chapter Acts. “Vocation” is one of those topics, especially in light of the #2 priority the Brothers gave it at the Constitutive Assembly of June 2013. In order to come to a better understanding of how we currently and could do vocation ministry, we would like to address with you this document as a starting point for what will eventually move toward District Chapter.

A little historical context:

In 1998, the SF Lasallian Education Corporation (LEC) passed a policy for “Religious Studies and Campus Ministry” that, in part, named “vocation ministry” as a component of those two areas of a school. This document was disseminated by the Office of Education and the then Director of Vocation Ministry started work with a representative group of school and community people to form the first draft of the following document. It later was revised and approved through the Vocation Coordinators, the Vocation/Initial Formation Committee, the Directors Association and the District Council. It was finally approved by the District Chapter.

Around 2011, the Louisiana Lasallian Education Corporation (LLEC) passed a similar “Religious Studies and Campus Ministry” policy. It was not publically disseminated to the NO-SF principals but they were aware of it. In the meantime, LEC revised their policy, mostly as a response to canonical responsibilities in regards to Bishops/Dioceses.

In 2012, the following document was used by the then Director of Vocation Promotion of the NO-SF District as a guide for developing a “culture of vocation” in the schools.

In August of 2014, the LEC and LLEC, reviewed, revised and passed the same policy in order to be on the same page.

Fall 2014: School and Community Vocation Coordinators gave input for revisions

Summer 2015: Vocation Team revised the document and approval by consensus

October 2015: San Miguel Committee reviewed the document and approval by consensus.

Guide to Vocation Programs

District of San Francisco New Orleans

“The entire People of God is responsible for awakening vocations in the Church. The Brothers make their Lasallian charism known, and show the importance and specificity of their vocation. They show they are willing and ready as intermediaries of the Lord to invite and accompany young people and adults who feel called to the various Lasallian vocations.” (Rule, art. 84)

“The Vocation Program for the District of San Francisco New Orleans” sets the guidelines for the pastoral ministry of vocations within the District. It is regularly reviewed by the District Council and, when, revised approved by the Visitor.

This document is intended for the support of those involved with vocation ministry at the District, community and school level.

Quick reference guide for parts pertinent to the Vocation Coordinators (some are common to all):

	Schools	Communities	District
Coordinator “Job Description”	2.32	2.31	2.2.1
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Overall: Purpose, values, goals	Section 1.00		
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November 2015

1.00 Purpose, Values and Goals of Vocation Ministry

1.10 The **Core Purpose** of the Vocation Ministry program of the San Francisco New Orleans District is to awaken, nurture, and accompany God's call in the lives of those entrusted to our care, both those we serve as well as with those whom we live and work.

1.20 The following **Core Values** of Vocation Ministry support the purpose and guide our goals and develop a culture of vocation:

1. There is a call (mission) from God that is given to everyone.
2. Living one's vocation in authentic witness promotes vocation awareness.
3. Nurturing one's relationship with God is fundamental to identifying one's vocation.
4. Identifying one's vocation leads to liberation and wholeness.
5. Accompaniment is both communal and individual.
6. The vocational call is based in the experience of community and mission.
7. Vocation Ministry is the responsibility of everyone and is an aspect of living out one's own vocation.

1.30 The following **Goals** direct vocation efforts at all levels in the District:

1. All Brothers, teachers, staff, students and parents articulate their own vocation and awaken, nurture and accompany others in their vocation.
2. All teachers, staff and students will have a basic understanding and direct experience of the Brothers and the Brothers' life in order to communicate and promote the viability of the Brothers' life and to see it as a possibility for some of them.
3. The Brothers promote their vocation to groups and individuals outside of our works.
4. Vocational support will be available for persons beyond their time in a Lasallian Ministry.

2.00 Role of Vocation Ministers

2.1 District Support of Vocation Ministry: In this ministry of assisting young men and women of school age and young men of post-high school age in the discernment of God's call to them in their lives, the District makes available the services of designated programs and personnel in support of Vocation Ministry. The District programs are coordinated with Regional and Institute programs.

2.1.1 The Director of Vocation Ministry works within the Office of Formation and in collaboration with the Office of Education/Formation in developing a culture of vocation and accompaniment in the District. The Director of Vocation Ministry gathers a team to promote and accompany vocations through a variety of programs geared toward education and discernment. The Vocation team is composed of Brothers and Lay Partners whom work with the District Director of Vocation Ministry on vocation promotion and accompaniment efforts.

The team seeks to create, sustain, and strengthen a culture of vocations by supporting the efforts of each school within the District. Special attention is given to attract candidates to the Brothers of the Christian Schools whom the Spirit calls to participate in the Lasallian mission. In all efforts, the accompaniment of individuals on their vocation journeys is the central focus. Specific responsibilities the Director ensures are covered by the team include:

- a) Accompaniment of Contacts and Aspirants
 1. interviews with prospective Contacts / Aspirants.

2. Coordinate faith, service, and community experiences with and for the Contacts and Aspirants, including a Summer Program.
3. Coordinate with schools and communities on the placement of Contacts and Aspirants in volunteer opportunities and live-in experiences.
4. Coordinate a process that engages individual Brothers of the District in the accompaniment of Contacts and Aspirants.
5. Coordinate annual process for acceptance of new Contacts / Aspirants as well as the renewal of returning Contacts / Aspirants.
6. Provide to the communities a regularly updated Contact / Aspirant contact information list.
7. Coordinate the production of any public relations materials about or for Contacts / Aspirants.
8. Provide appropriate follow up to the schools in regards to the young men who participated in the "Called and Chosen" Lasallian Vocation Retreat for the Secondary Schools of the District.
9. Field inquiries of individuals requesting information about the Brothers' life.
10. Collaborate with the Regional Directors of the Postulancy and Novitiate in connecting Contacts and Aspirants with those respective communities
11. Coordinate the application of candidates to Postulancy

b) Communication with Local Communities

1. Coordinate material to assist the Community Vocation Coordinators in their responsibility to conduct community vocation program formation at CAP.
2. Assist in organizing and conducting Vocation Coordinators' meeting(s).
3. Assist communities, as requested, in the development and planning of their CAP community vocation program.
4. Meet semi-annually with each Community Vocation Coordinator for the purpose of evaluation and support of community vocation programs.
5. Provide reflective readings and materials concerning vocations.
6. Promote Brother participation in student programs.
7. When geographically practical, assist in the coordination and promotion of cooperative ventures between community programs.

c) Communication with Schools

1. Organize and conduct the annual "Called and Chosen" Lasallian Vocation Retreats for the Secondary Schools of the District.
2. Organize and conduct the Vocation Coordinators' Meeting for Brother and/or Partner Vocation Coordinators appointed from each school and community.
3. Assist schools, as requested, in the development and planning of their school vocation program.
4. Meet semi-annually with each School Vocation Coordinator for the purpose of evaluation and support of school vocation programs.
5. Make presentations as requested to District groups, associations, or committees (e.g., Secondary School Administrators Association).
6. Be available for teacher retreats/in-services, especially in communicating and reflecting on the Lasallian vocation.
7. Coordinate and develop resources to assist schools in implementing their vocation programs.

d) Public Relations, and Publicity:

1. Develop, evaluate, and revise a strategic plan for communication related to vocation promotion.
2. Work with the District Director of Communication on public relations.
3. Contribute to the websites of the District (www.delasalle.org), the Region (www.brothersvocation.org) and the Institute (www.lasalle.org).
4. Contribute to other social media venues (e.g.; www.facebook.com/BrothersVocation).
5. Make contact information available to Diocesan vocation websites and regularly update such information.
6. Coordinate production of PR materials pertaining specifically to the Brothers vocation and formation.
7. Coordinate efforts in vocation presentations or booths in diocesan and/or Regional venues.

e) Administrative:

1. Develop, evaluate and revise a strategic plan for District vocation ministry efforts.
2. Establish responsibilities with and for members of the District Vocation Team.
3. Advise District Leadership on mission-related items that impact vocation ministry.
4. Serve on the District Formation Committees.
5. Serve on the District Directors Association.
6. Serve on the Regional RVFC meetings and/or any Regional Vocation Directors meetings.
7. Collaborate with local NRVC Vocation Directors groups.
8. Provide and/or make regular reports to the District Council, Directors Association and Formation Committees.

f) Other:

1. Collaborate on Lasallian Collegian program models, structure and shared programs.
2. Make presentations as requested to District groups, associations, or committees (e.g., Directors Association, District Council, SSAA, Mission Council).
3. Be available for teacher retreats / in-services, especially in communicating and reflecting on the Lasallian Brother vocation.
4. Collaborate with the Coordinator for Lasallian Student Programs on common initiatives and programs.
5. Collaborate with the Coordinator of Lasallian Student Programs on any other areas of cross over between student programs and Brother vocation programs.
6. Participate in workshops that further deepen one's understanding of the Brothers vocation, vocation ministry, and young people today looking toward vocation as Brothers.
7. Monitors annual Board of Trustees reports on the progress of each schools' Catholic Lasallian Assessment Process (CLASP) and Religious Studies Assesment.

2.2 Special Role of the Brothers and Their Communities: "While each District, Delegation, and sector should have someone in charge of vocations who coordinates this work, vocation ministry is a responsibility of all the Brothers" (*Circular 466*, 3.29). More precisely, every Brother, especially if he is an animator of a faith group or an instructor, is potentially responsible for accompanying vocations, and he should consider it his duty to undertake the task of awakening and strengthening vocations among those with whom he has dealings" (*Guide for Formation*, 64). "Every community includes in its Community Annual Program specific actions related to vocation ministry, as recommended in Circular 466. These

actions should involve all of the Brothers.” (General Chapter 2104, prop. 23) Because the Brothers consecrate themselves to their ministry as a community, they make themselves available, individually and as a community, to assist people in the vocational discernment process through:

1. Personal and communal prayer (R 85);
2. Community and district hospitality;
3. Communication by way of personal contacts and other modes of personal correspondence;
4. Educational projects in their service to the needs of people who are poor (R 84.3);
5. The development of a Community Vocation Program which collaborates with the local ministry (where one exists) especially with those Brothers and lay colleagues who are primarily responsible for the formation, evaluation, and development of programs most in touch with student faith development (e.g. vocation, religious studies department, campus ministry, service, Lasallian Youth, faculty formation) (R 84); and
6. Witnessing to and discussing the vitality of their own vocation (R 86).

2.3 Local Vocation Coordinators: District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry work in close collaboration with each School and Community Vocation Coordinator of the District who, in turn work in close collaboration with the local community (Brothers and/or lay colleagues) in promoting vocations to the Church as a consecrated Brother or Sister, as a priest, or as married or single person. Individually and collectively they identify and nurture potential candidates for religious life and priesthood.

2.31 Community Vocation Coordinator: Prior to or at its annual CAP meeting, the Director of each community assures the appointment of a Brother Vocation Coordinator to assist the community in formulating a vocation program and holding itself accountable to the program. The Community Vocation Coordinator’s responsibilities include:

1. Coordinating with the Community Director in preparing community discussions and planning for the community vocation program, particularly the CAP.
2. Coordinating the execution of the Community Vocation Program.
3. Assisting and meeting regularly with the School Vocation Coordinator (if the community is attached to a school) in the school vocation program, particularly elements dealing with the Brothers’ life and inviting young men to consider the Brothers.
4. Submitting the Community Vocation Program to the District Director of Vocation Ministry by October 1.
5. Attending District meeting(s) of Community Vocation Coordinators.
6. Meeting at least twice a year with the District Director of Vocation Ministry.

2.32 School Vocation Coordinators: The School Vocation Coordinator is accountable to the Principal, in consultation with the District Director of Vocation Ministry and the Director of the local Community (if one is present at the school) for evaluation of the program and his or her continued work as coordinator. The School Vocation Coordinator is the primary motivator and organizer of vocational efforts in the school. The following model job description for the school coordinator is expected to be integrated into individual school faculty handbooks and developed to fit local needs:

- a) Promoting vocations to religious life as a brother or sister, to priesthood, to sacramental marriage, and to single life forming Church as dedicated ministers;
- b) Forming and evaluating the school’s comprehensive vocation program in light of the District Vocation Guide as well as the school’s annual report from their Catholic Lasallian Assessment Process (CLASP) and Religious Studies Assessment;

- c) Informing the District Director of Vocation Ministry of the date for the school's annual vocation program evaluation and planning meetings;
- d) Forming a team of faculty and staff to assist in evaluation and planning as well as in surfacing names of students for any school workshops, vocation retreats, and the Contact and Aspirancy Programs (see Appendix 1);
- e) Educating the faculty/staff about the school program and the larger district program in which the school is a part;
- f) Acting as a liaison between the District Vocation personnel and the school by:
 - 1) Placing on the school calendar any Vocation personnel visits as well as class visits and workshops);
 - 2) Setting up the logistics of the visits and workshops (e.g. informing teachers of days/times/class periods of the visits, arranging for a room for personal interviews, lunch arrangements for workshops);
 - 3) Surfacing names of qualified students for participation in the workshops and inviting them to attend;
 - 4) Attending the District Vocation Coordinators Meeting(s);
 - 5) Meeting with the District Vocation personnel as they visit the school; and,
 - 6) Keeping the Principal and the Brothers'/Lasallian community (if one is present at the school) informed of their responsibilities in terms of the vocation program and reporting to them on progress with programs and activities;
- g) Consulting with the Community Vocation Coordinator of the local community (if one is present at the school) on all aspects of the school's vocation program; and,
- h) Preparing the budget for the program.

3.00 Description of Programs

- 3.1** The awareness of a "call" to religious life normally takes time to unfold within the context of an individual's life experiences. We provide three initial levels of discernment for individuals with the desire and ability to explore the option of Church ministry, particularly as a Brother. The levels are:
1. The Comprehensive School Vocation Program (programmatic elements at each grade level)
 2. The Post-High School Program
 - A. Contact Program (1-4 year program)
 - B. The Aspirancy Program (1-5 year program)
 3. Application to the Postulancy Program (1-2 year program)
- 3.2** Each level provides activities that address the developmental needs of the individuals most represented in that level. An **invitation** is offered to each young person to participate in an **activity** that later involves a **follow-up** leading to another invitation. As an individual moves through the final two levels, the emphasis becomes increasingly more directed toward discernment as a De La Salle Christian Brother. Also, the expectation of commitment to the process increases. Within the communal structure of the classroom and workshop formats, each level provides:
- Education and experience in **reflection and prayer**;
 - Education about and/or opportunity for **educational service with the poor**; and
 - Education about the **Brothers' life in community, St. John Baptist de La Salle, and ministry in the Church.**

4.0 Level 1: The School Vocation Program

4.1 General Description of Program and Delineation of Responsibilities

Each of the schools of the District formulates a comprehensive vocation education program in collaboration with the District Directors of Vocation Ministry. The program promotes and fosters vocation in the Church as a priest, brother, sister, married person and committed lay minister. Particular attention is focused on the vocation of a De La Salle Christian Brother.

4.11 School Responsibilities: The comprehensive school program addresses the experience of vocation in terms understandable and appropriate to students at their particular level. This is done through classroom presentations, activities, and retreats which take into consideration the life and times, and the experience of the students. The school coordinates the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program in light of the particular curricular and co-curricular programs of the school. **Lasallian Education Corporation (LEC)** and **Louisiana Lasallian Education Corporation (LLEC)** schools are specifically guided in their vocation ministry by the “Policy for Religious Studies and Campus Ministry” which includes vocation as part of religious studies curriculum and the campus ministry program. These programs are evaluated regularly through the Catholic Lasallian Assessment Process (CLASP) and the Religious Studies Assessment which are monitored annually by the schools’ Boards of Trustees and during school visits by District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry.

4.12 School and District Shared Responsibilities: District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry make themselves available upon request for vocation activities and materials such as:

- Class presentations and personal interviews students on the occasion of school visitations
- One day workshops
- Parent and faculty presentations on vocation
- Student retreats on the topic of vocation
- Resources in the area of vocation ministry (including online resources and formation opportunities)

4.13 District Responsibilities: District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry will conduct an annual “Called and Chosen” Lasallian Vocation Retreat for students from the District secondary schools who are invited by the School Vocation Coordinator. This retreat opportunity allows the nominated and screened students to examine their developing vocation in light of the exploration of the vocation in the Church as a priest, brother, sister, married person and committed lay minister, while placing a special emphasis on Lasallian vocations, especially that of a De La Salle Christian Brother. Furthermore, the District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry will assist the Vocation Coordinator in:

- Acquiring vocation resources to use in the school program;
- The process for inviting young men into further discernment in the Contact and Aspirancy Programs;
- The annual evaluation and planning of their school program.

- 4.14 Program Evaluation:** By May 15 of each year an evaluation of the program is to be conducted by the School Vocation Coordinator. District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry are to be invited to participate in the evaluation. The evaluation is to include recommendations and suggestions concerning:
- a) Implementation and effectiveness of the program activities;
 - b) Effectiveness of collaboration with and education of students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration;
 - c) Collaboration with District vocation personnel and vision in Vocation Ministry; and,
 - d) District vocation personnel collaboration with the Vocation Coordinator.
- 4.15 Three Year Plan:** As part of the evaluation, the Vocation Coordinator is to revise the ongoing 3-year plan for development of their school's vocation program and send the plan to the District Vocation personnel.

5.0 Level 2: Post High School Vocation Program

- 5.1 Introduction:** At all stages of the Vocational Discernment Process (Contact Program, Aspirancy, Postulancy), formation of the candidate is taking place and the candidate is the one who is primarily responsible for this maturing process. From the Contact experience through Aspirancy, and then through Postulancy, Novitiate and Temporary Profession, the candidate is responding to the special call of God in his life by and through a process called "Initial Formation." After Final Vows, this process is called "Continuing Formation" because God continues to summon the Brother and the Brother has the opportunity to continue to respond to God's Call in his life. Vocation, then, is a continuing dialogue between God and the Brother for the purpose of further establishing His Kingdom on earth. Therefore, the Brothers consecrate themselves to God in order to exercise, together and by association, their apostolic ministry of education, which is to give a Christian education to the young, especially to and for persons who are poor.
- 5.2** The fulfillment of this apostolic purpose is done by a De La Salle Christian Brother according to the manner and in the way uniquely articulated by *The Rule*:
- Each Brother takes upon himself the responsibility of integrating within his own person the constitutive elements of his vocation: Consecration to God as lay religious; Apostolic ministry of education, especially the poor; Community Life.*
- Ch. 1, art. 12
- 5.3** The major goal of the post-high school program, Contact, and Aspirancy, is to provide young men the opportunity to develop a keen sense of association as lived by the De La Salle Christian Brothers in their educational ministry and in their local communities. The association presents challenges for growth and development central to leading a life rooted in faith, service and community. To better assist young men in discovering and discerning their suitability for the De La Salle Christian Brothers and the suitability of the De La Salle Christian Brothers for them, a young man must be a Catholic in good health and have the ability to perform academic work on the collegiate level. He should also fulfill the following general criteria:
1. Be a man of **Faith**, by
 - a) Possessing that degree of Faith that moves him to be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in his life.

- b) Developing his personal prayer life and intimate relationship with Jesus.
- 2. Be a man of **Service**, by
 - a) Interesting himself in serving others, especially those who are poor, through the educational ministries of the De La Salle Christian Brothers.
- 3. Be a man for **Community**, by
 - a) Possessing a generosity of heart that favorably disposes him to be willing to work and possibly live with the De La Salle Christian Brothers and their Lasallian partners in education.

5.4 Contacts and Aspirants are not only invited into association with the Brothers of the District and exposed to District culture, but are also invited into activities that help them understand that they are part of a Region and Institute. As such, developments in District vocation programs take into account developments in Regional and Institute vocation programs.

6.0 Level 2a: The Contact Program

6.1 Graduating high school Seniors, college and post-collegiate men may apply for acceptance to the Contact and Aspirancy Programs with the understanding that they have reflectively considered:

- A) Their openness and interest in pursuing the possibility of a vocation to the life and work of the De La Salle Christian Brothers as one vocation option among a number of other possible options in their life; and
- B) Their willingness to develop their spiritual life in the context of the Catholic church.

6.2 College students, post-collegiate and older candidates would normally begin their inquiry into the possibility of becoming a De La Salle Christian Brother at the Contact level, though it would be possible for college and post-collegiate candidates to enter directly into the Aspirancy program if they exhibit an aptitude and are qualified, interested, and accepted by the District Vocation Team member responsible for accompaniment in dialogue with the Vocation Team. While the Contact program is one that is tailored to the accompaniment needs of each individual and which remains invitational in nature, the following is expected from each Contact:

6.2.1 Annual participation in at least one District retreat for Contacts.

6.2.2 Annual participation in at least one ministerial and community experience coordinated by District personnel responsible for Vocation Ministry.

6.2.3 Ongoing communication with the District Director of Vocation Ministry or a Brother Mentor.

6.3 In April/May of each year, a mutual decision between the Contact and District Director of Vocation Ministry will be made concerning the Contact's reapplication to the program. The annual reapplication process normally continues for up to 2 times (for a total of 3 years as a Contact). A Contact may, however, discontinue the program at any time.

6.4 The Contact Program is designed for single Catholic men, 18 or older, who would like to learn more about the religious life and ministry of the De La Salle Christian Brothers and who are open to the possibility of being called by God to such a religious vocation. Contacts meet regularly with a Brother Mentor and the Director of Vocation Ministry in order to discern their vocation. Contacts involve themselves in short term experiences with the Brothers in

community and their educational setting and are open to engaging in local service opportunities related to teaching and the possibility of summer ministry opportunities with other Contacts in the Region. Contacts agree to develop their spiritual life through reading, personal prayer and making a yearly retreat. Those accompanying Contacts and Aspirants have the support of the "Guide for Brother Mentors" as provided by the Director of Vocation Ministry responsible for accompaniment.

7.0 Level 2a: The Aspirancy Program

- 7.1** College and post-collegiate men are invited to become Aspirants by the District Director of Vocation Ministry. These young men normally have participated in the Contact Program for a period of at least one-year and have demonstrated during their time as a Contact a willingness to become more focused in their discernment process regarding a possible vocation to the Christian Brothers' way of life. Contacts are also given the opportunity each April/May to request participation in the Aspirancy program for the following year.
- 7.2** In March/April of the first year, a mutual decision between the Aspirant and the District Director of Vocation Ministry will be made concerning the Aspirant's application to another year in the program. An Aspirant may, however, discontinue the program at any time.
- 7.3** Aspirants engage in all the programmatic expectations of the Contact Program with the intention of more closely exploring the practical decision of becoming a Brother as a Postulant.
- 7.4** An Aspirant may be allowed, encouraged or required to live and work in a community as a Resident Aspirant before applying to Postulancy.

8.0 Application to the Postulancy Program (The First Stage of Initial Formation)

- 8.1 The Postulancy**
The Postulancy is that stage in initial formation which precedes and prepares for entry into the Novitiate ... The Postulancy offers the candidate the means to continue to mature as a person and to enrich his faith, so that he can discern how authentic is his vocation to the Brothers' life. --The Rule, Ch. 6, art. 91
- 8.2** A young man can apply for admission to Postulancy ordinarily after at least one year as an Aspirant. The Brother responsible for working with the candidate through the application process brings the materials to the Director of Formation for review of the District Admissions Committee. The committee makes recommendations to the Visitor. Upon acceptance into Postulancy, candidates begin the first stage of their initial formation process.
- 8.3** Postulants live in community with other Postulants and Brothers, part of the time being in a Regional Postulancy residence. The Postulancy Program may include completing degree work augmented with theological studies, as well as, apostolic work in an educational setting while living in community.

- 8.4 Separate District, Regional, and Institute documentation describe in more detail the program of Postulancy as well as criteria for admissions.

9.0 Evaluation of Overall Program

- 9.1 By July 1 of each year an evaluation of the program is to be conducted annually by the District Vocation personnel. The evaluation is to include recommendations and suggestions concerning:
- a) Implementation and effectiveness of the program activities;
 - b) Collaboration with District formation personnel and the Vocation Initial Formation Committee; and,
 - c) Collaboration with vocation coordinators, Directors, and leaders of our District works.
- 9.2 **Three Year Plan:** As part of the evaluation, the Vocation Team will construct a 3-year plan for development of the vocation program, as well as set individual goals for the coming year.