

# what

makes an SNJM school SNJM?

service  
Holy Names mission  
Jesus Mary sisters ministry  
education  
values  
leadership faith  
development human justice  
person  
full

# what makes an SNJM school SNJM?

**Ask people what attracts them** to schools sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and they'll give good reasons, including this: They've seen how Catholic education, as envisioned by the Sisters, can empower people to unlock their God-given gifts. Helping people to develop their full potential is the foundation of the Sisters' mission and ministries. It's the heartbeat of an SNJM school.

**In SNJM schools "full development"** applies to the broader school community, not just the students. For that reason the Sisters expect the schools' faculties, staffs and boards to develop and share their gifts by being stewards of education, faith, justice and leadership. Those expectations developed relatively recently in the more than 170-year history of SNJM schools. For the first 130 or so years, Sisters held all of the school leadership roles. That was the status quo in Catholic education until the 1970s when the schools began to implement changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council. Those changes enabled the Sisters to invite lay persons to become teachers, staff members and administrators. Lay leadership of schools and their boards is now the norm.

**Mindful that Holy Names ministries** will continue their transition into lay leadership, the SNJM U.S.-Ontario Province Leadership Team empowered the Office of Incorporated Province Ministries to provide resources that promote a common understanding of what makes an SNJM ministry "SNJM." This document is one such resource.

In this booklet you will find information about:

1. The Sisters' mission
2. Key values held in common by members of the SNJM Network of Schools
3. Characteristics of an SNJM school

## Mission statement of the Sisters of the Holy Names

"By our mission we seek the full development of the human person through education, social justice, contemplation and the arts, especially with people who are impoverished and marginalized."

(SNJM congregational website, [www.snjm.org](http://www.snjm.org))



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## Key values of Holy Names schools

Each school sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary belongs to the SNJM Network of Schools. The Network members share a sense of stewardship based on these key values, from which the “characteristics of an SNJM school” (next pages) were developed.

***Our mission is rooted in:***

Full development of the human person

*Cultivating and respecting the talents, abilities and potential of each person, contributing to the development of all aspects of a person’s life*

Education in the faith

*Creating an atmosphere which invites people to live, develop and express their faith*

Hospitality

*Being a gracious, accepting and welcoming presence for each person*

Dedication to women and children

*Seeing, understanding and responding to the needs of women and children*

Dedication to justice

*Committing time, energy and resources to the pursuit of right relationships of equality, justice and solidarity*

Service to people who are poor or marginalized

*Reaching out and responding to people who are impoverished, abandoned or living at the fringes of society*

Commitment to liberating action

*Seeking with others the freedom needed to live life fully without oppression*

Love for the names and persons of Jesus and Mary

*Embracing as guide, inspiration and strength the persons and names of Jesus and Mary*



*“Cultivating and respecting the talents, abilities and potential of each person...”*  
**Holy Names Academy, Seattle, WA**

# Characteristics that describe an SNJM school

**Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher**, a woman of extraordinary faith and courage who sought God in all things, led her Congregation to promote education in the faith with a special concern for people who are poor and marginalized. Her dream lives on today in the Incorporated Ministries of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

As schools sponsored by the SNJM U.S.-Ontario Province, we share a common Catholic faith tradition and SNJM mission and charism, embodied in key values. Together, we understand our responsibility to set direction, establish policies and ensure that programs effectively express our SNJM identity and mission.

## 1. Stewards of Education

**An SNJM school provides excellence in education which brings about the full development of the human person. Our school identifies, cultivates and celebrates the talents, abilities and potential of each person: students, staff, faculty, alumnae, trustees/directors, parents.**

- A. The school environment encourages and supports the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social and physical development of all the members of the learning community.
- B. The curriculum and instruction challenge each student's skills in critical thinking, ethical decision making, creative problem solving, self-evaluation, communication and collaboration to face life's constant change.
- C. The school provides students with opportunities to develop skills for leadership and ministry and encourages them to assume these roles in their school, church, local and global communities and chosen profession.



“The school environment encourages and supports the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social and physical development of all the members of the learning community.”  
**Academy of the Holy Names, Tampa, FL**

- D. School programs offer a global perspective which expands the individual's knowledge of and respect for cultural and religious diversity and the richness it offers.
- E. The school environment is student-centered.
- F. The school gives each student the opportunity to nurture an intimate connection between the creative spirit and its expression in the arts.
- G. Reflection, feedback and evaluation are common practices, assisting all individuals in the school community as they improve their skills and performance.
- H. School leaders ensure that faculty and staff regularly update their professional skills and knowledge, and work collaboratively.
- I. Teachers use a variety of assessment tools aligned with learning outcomes to evaluate student learning. The communication of student progress is timely and transparent.
- J. Young women are encouraged to develop a strong voice and understand their rightful place in the world.
- K. Through data generated by a variety of tools, the school regularly assesses and revises its academic and co-curricular programs to meet both current best practices and emerging needs.
- L. A partnership is developed between school personnel and parents/guardians to enhance educational experiences and build the school community.
- M. The SNJM tradition of being progressive and forward-thinking permeates the school's future.
- N. The school demands high standards and accountability of its students, staff and board.



“The school gives each student the opportunity to nurture an intimate connection between the creative spirit and its expression in the arts.”  
**Academy of the Holy Names, Albany, NY**

## 2. Stewards of Faith

**We are educators in the faith, and we embrace as guide, inspiration and strength the persons and names of Jesus and Mary. Faith formation is a distinguishing characteristic of our school. We believe that God is good, and we honor God's goodness by creating a welcoming place for people to explore and express their faith.**

- A. The school environment is faith-filled, based on Gospel values and the traditions of the Catholic Church, and welcomes people of all faiths who support the school's mission and values.
- B. The school demonstrates its Catholic identity by celebrating liturgies and offering worship services, prayer opportunities, retreats, reflections and structured community service programs.
- C. Each student participates in the school's worship life and religion/theology courses.
- D. Each member of the broader school community, including trustees/directors, administrators, faculty, staff, and parents, supports the school's faith life.
- E. Faculty and staff members encourage one another to be models of Christ's teachings and Gospel values as they fulfill their roles as educators, mentors and nurturers.
- F. The school's mission statement clearly communicates the school's Catholic identity and its roots in the traditions of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.
- G. The school community understands its SNJM legacy and systematically educates all constituents in the history, mission and values of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.
- H. Physical signs of Jesus, Mary and SNJM history are visible throughout the school.
- I. Each school's connection to the SNJM Congregation and to the key values is expressed in its handbooks, web sites and publications, and at community events.



*"Creating an atmosphere which invites people to live, develop and express their faith."  
Holy Names High School, Oakland, CA*

### 3. Stewards of Justice

We commit ourselves to justice and service for others. Grounded in Christ's teachings and motivated by love and compassion, the school community commits time, energy and resources to the pursuit of right relationships of equality, justice and solidarity.

- A. Inspired by the Sisters' regard for the well-being of the earth and its people, the school community takes socially responsible actions against injustice, reaches out and responds to people who are poor and marginalized, challenges oppression and responds to the needs of women and children.
- B. The school community educates and takes action in support of the SNJM corporate stands concerning justice and peace.
- C. The school integrates service-learning into academic and co-curricular activities, expecting students to learn about Catholic social teachings and develop skills for social analysis and critical consciousness.
- D. Communication is respectful, open, transparent, direct and continual; when conflict occurs, participants seek resolution and peaceful reconciliation.
- E. The school community strives for full inclusion by creating a compassionate environment where each individual is treated with honor and dignity.
- F. The decision-making process invites collaboration and consensus.



"The school community lives the Sisters' commitment to taking socially responsible actions against injustice..."

Ramona Convent Secondary School, Alhambra, CA

#### 4. Stewards of Leadership

**Sound and ethical governance and operational practices are steeped in the mission and values of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. With the mission as a guiding light, the school strategically plans and operates with the goal of financial stability, program excellence and future vitality and viability.**

- A. School leadership and the board understand and fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities as set forth in the school's Articles of Incorporation or Charter. They also understand their relationship with the Sisters of the Holy Names and responsibilities to the Members of their corporation.
- B. The school community embraces a leadership model that cultivates a culture of trust, develops shared leadership and focuses on the growth and well-being of people.
- C. Each school takes part in a cyclical process that assesses how effectively the SNJM key values are lived throughout the school community.
- D. The employee handbook includes clear personnel policies, procedures and expectations.
- E. The school's tuition and financial aid allocations reflect the commitment to socio-economic diversity and wise use of limited resources.
- F. The school's personnel develop a partnership with alumnae and donors as they work together to accomplish the school's goals.
- G. Processes for recruitment, orientation, ongoing mentoring, and evaluation of trustees/directors, administrators, faculty and staff incorporate the SNJM mission and values as well as professional competencies.
- H. The school's leadership works collaboratively with other SNJM schools and actively participates in the Network of Schools.
- I. School leadership and the board develop sound financial plans and budgets and implement them using effective business practices to provide good stewardship of resources.
- J. The school's facility, equipment and technology management plans support the educational program and establish policies to ensure a safe environment.



**"The school's facility, equipment and technology management plans support the educational program."  
St. Mary's Academy, Portland, OR**