

CHURCH AND SCHOOL STRATEGY – Summary

Key Takeaways from the EDOT Strategy Steering Committee 2 Summary Deck (October 2024)

1. Church Growth Strategy: Four Key Levers

The Diocese's growth strategy is structured around **four primary levers**:

- **Revival:** Restoring attendance to historical levels in churches with declining participation.
- **Expansion:** Extending existing, stable parishes to reach new congregants.
- **Church Planting:** Establishing new churches in underserved or growing areas.
- **Strategic Investment:** Assessing church sustainability and reallocating resources where revival is not feasible.

Each lever involves:

- A structured **playbook approach** with assessment, targeted initiatives, and governance.
- Tailored **Diocesan support**, ranging from independent execution to intensive leadership intervention.

2. Church Revival

- Aimed at reversing declining attendance, particularly in congregations where historic attendance trends indicate recovery potential.
- Requires **leadership engagement, programmatic initiatives, and Diocesan governance**.
- Success hinges on:
 - Strong leadership teams with **effective vision and communication**.
 - Worship experiences that are **engaging and relatable**.
 - Integration of **online resources and alternative forms of engagement**.
 - Adaptability to community needs.

3. Church Expansion

- Focuses on **healthy parishes with stable attendance and growing surrounding populations**.
- Can be executed with **passive (self-sustaining) or active (Diocese-supported) engagement**.
- Strategies include:
 - Expanding physical campuses.
 - Introducing **new ministries** to reach diverse groups.
 - Developing **satellite locations**.

4. Church Planting

- Targets **areas with low Episcopal presence or underserved populations** in already saturated regions.
- Requires:
 - **Demographic and geographic assessments** to identify high-potential locations.
 - Development of **real estate, leadership, financial, and marketing playbooks**.
 - A **community-led but Diocese-guided model**.
 - A **three-phase execution plan** focused on long-term sustainability.

5. School Growth Strategy

- Mirrors church strategy with three core areas:
 - **Optimization:** Increasing enrollment in existing schools.
 - **Expansion:** Adding grades to strengthen the educational pipeline.
 - **School Planting:** Establishing new schools where Episcopal presence is lacking.
- Key factors for success include:
 - **Strong leadership and engagement with families.**
 - **Relevant and engaging curriculum.**
 - **Community-building efforts.**
 - Strategic use of **Diocesan support for leadership development and financial sustainability.**

6. Survey Results & Takeaways

- The **strategic priorities are generally agreed upon**, but **communication needs improvement**.
- **Leadership development strategies** require clarification.
- **Diocesan foundations** are perceived as valuable but could be more proactive in communication.
- **Intergenerational ministry lacks clear strategy and resources.**
- **Multicultural ministry needs structured plans**, with those who implement strategies seeing success.
- **Church planting efforts need better long-term planning.**
- **Community outreach efforts show mixed effectiveness**, often depending on alignment with congregational strengths.
- **Schools are seen as an area needing stronger support**, despite demographic opportunities.

7. Next Steps

- **Resource prioritization** is needed to align with the Diocesan vision.
- Steering Committee members are asked to **allocate resources across strategic opportunities**.
- **Implementation roadmap** will be finalized in the next committee meeting.
- **Three-phase strategic development process:**
 - **Fact Gathering:** Assessing EDOT's current state.
 - **Strategy Design:** Developing a comprehensive roadmap.
 - **Implementation Blueprint:** Establishing execution plans.

Summary of Key Action Items

- **Enhance communication and awareness** of Diocesan strategic efforts.
- **Develop a structured governance model** to support and oversee revival, expansion, and church planting.
- **Clarify leadership development paths** to ensure sustainable church growth.
- **Strengthen school engagement strategies** to optimize enrollment and expansion.
- **Allocate resources strategically** based on impact potential and long-term sustainability.

This strategy aims to **strengthen Episcopal presence** through **sustainable church and school growth**, ensuring **leadership, community engagement, and mission alignment** drive future initiatives.