



March 30, 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we continue our Lenten journey together, our newly formed school board is also journeying through the regionalization process as we lay the foundation for years to come!

The board convened on March 22 to discuss several matters. The principals or acting school administrators of the seven current schools that are being reconfigured into three new schools were asked to attend for their input on many discussion points. They continue to work diligently on a daily basis, assisting with many necessary and arduous processes for the regionalization of our schools. We welcome their insight and value their dedication. The following is a summary of the meeting.

### **Additional Tuition Rates**

The 2017-18 non-Catholic student tuition rates and pre-K tuition rates have been established for the three new schools (St. Mary/St. Ursula/St. Bonaventure; St. Alexis/St. Alphonsus; and St. Teresa/St. Sebastian).

- After being presented with financial data from education finance personnel, the board determined that the non-Catholic tuition rate for all three new schools will be \$6,500 per student, based upon the actual cost of educating a student and recognizing the need to move toward regionalized tuition. An additional consideration was the competitive private school environment within the area. The motion was passed by a majority vote.
- The pre-K tuition rates were decided upon unanimously based on trends in the demand for pre-K care, and the reality that Catholic pre-K programs have historically undervalued the services that they offer, and they are as follows:
  - 3 year olds/5 days per week - \$5,500 per child
  - 3 year olds/2 days per week - \$4,000 per child
  - 4 year olds/5 days per week - \$5,500 per child
  - 4 year olds/3 days per week - \$4,500 per child
- There will be no half-day Kindergarten rates, given the low number of half-day Kindergarten demands amongst the existing schools that will comprise the three new schools. This was also a unanimous vote.

### **Faculty/Staff Decisions**

Interviews with all of the teachers at the existing schools have been completed by the principals and Mike Killmeyer, Regional Administrator; in addition, it has been agreed upon by diocesan schools office personnel and teacher union representatives that teachers will be notified of their placement by the end of April, depending upon enrollment at each school at that time.

### **Fundraising**

Each new school will continue to have fundraising goals, as in years past. The board stressed the importance of continued parish and community events that raise money to support Catholic education. We encourage all fundraising events (festivals, golf outings, etc.) and programs (Scrip, etc.) to continue, perhaps now with committees working together and increased community involvement, including the parishes that historically have not had schools. This process, along with many others in this transition, will take time and patience to see how things develop.

### **Parent-Teacher Organizations and Student Activities**

There was discussion regarding the cohesion and collaboration of certain groups already beginning to work together within the existing schools, such as athletic associations, parent-teacher groups, and school advisory councils. With the guidance of the principals, regional administrator, and pastors, we encourage this process to continue at the local level of parental and community involvement. Historically, these groups provide an opportunity for our students to enjoy athletics, field trips, in-school programming, etc. During the spring months we begin the process of registration and planning for many of these programs for the next school year. In the case of Scrip, it is encouraged to continue as an optional program, assisting in reducing the cost of tuition, while adding a portion of profits to the fundraising goal. These vital groups provide an opportunity to join efforts, explore new ideas, and bring renewed enthusiasm to the upcoming year.

### **School Naming**

Each parish and school community will begin the naming process within the next few weeks, initiated by the respective pastors and principals. Parishioners and school families will have the opportunity to participate in this decision-making process, ultimately approved by Bishop Zubik.

Thank you for your patience and your trust as we journey together through this transition. We understand the urgency to resolve issues as quickly as possible. However, it is imperative that we investigate and gather the proper information to aid our decision-making. We continue to place all of our efforts and attention towards the future sustainability and vibrancy of Catholic schools, and are pleased in the direction that we are heading!

Please continue to keep these important transition efforts, and everyone involved in them in your prayers.

The board will meet again on April 2.

Yours in Christ,

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