PARISH FAMILY 45
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Subject: Planning for the Future of Catholic Education in Our Parish Family

Dear St. Joseph and Our Lady of Lourdes School Families,

Over the past several months, Parish Family 45 has been engaged in a long-range planning process focused on the future of Catholic education in our community. With two Catholic elementary schools serving our Parish Family, we have an important responsibility to ensure that Catholic education remains strong, accessible and sustainable for generations to come.

This summer, we completed the first phase of that work with the assistance of an external consultant. Phase I was intentionally exploratory. It included a review of enrollment and demographic trends, academic programs, facilities, finances, philanthropy, and opportunities for greater collaboration between our schools. The process also included conversations with parents, parishioners, donors, school and parish leaders, and members of the broader community.

What did we learn?
We learned that there is much to build upon. Our schools have strong Catholic identities, committed communities and strong academic programs. We also serve a region where there is opportunity for continued growth in Catholic education, particularly in early learning and preschool. At the same time, we need to plan thoughtfully for aging facilities, long term financial sustainability, changing enrollment patterns and opportunities to share resources more effectively.

The work also helped us identify several principles that should guide whatever comes next: strengthening Catholic identity, maintaining excellent academics, supporting students across a range of needs, keeping families and community at the center, expanding opportunities for children, strengthening the pathway from early learning through high school, and using our resources responsibly.

What has been decided?
No decision has been made to reconfigure or consolidate either school. The Phase I process included exploration of several possible models so that we could better understand the opportunities, challenges and financial implications associated with different approaches. Those scenarios are tools for continued planning, not final recommendations.

What is the financial status of Our Lady of Lourdes (OLL) School?
Given the concerns shared last spring regarding the financial status of OLL School, a comprehensive review of OLL finances was conducted over the past six months. That review provided a clearer understanding of revenue, fundraising, and operations factors. As a result, OLL School ended the 2025-2026 fiscal year significantly stronger than initially projected.

Key revenue factors impacting this favorable result include greater tuition receipts resulting from increased enrollment, higher than expected fundraising proceeds and donations, and the appropriate

utilization of restricted funds in accordance with donor restrictions. On the expense side, the school was under budget in the areas of employee benefits, operations and maintenance, and supplies.

Our Lady of Lourdes School enters the 2026-2027 fiscal year with strong tuition revenue due to solid enrollment coupled with substantial increases in tuition rates, successful fundraising and generous donations, and opportunities for continued program expansion.

What happens next?
We are now preparing for Phase II. This next phase will deepen the financial and facilities analysis, explore opportunities for shared staffing and services, and, importantly, engage our school families and broader parish family in helping shape a long-term vision for Catholic education.

We know that our schools are much more than buildings and budgets. They are communities where children encounter Christ, grow in faith, develop their gifts and form relationships that often last a lifetime. Any planning for their future must begin there.

In the coming months, we will share additional information about what we learned in Phase I and provide opportunities for families, faculty, parishioners, and other stakeholders to participate in the conversation.

Thank you for your continued trust, partnership, and commitment to Catholic education.

In Christ,

Mrs. Mary Yamoah, Principal
St. Joseph Catholic School

Dr. Mary Ticknor, Principal
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School