

Catholic Schools Study Group Planning Committee

9/5/10

The group met on Thursday, August 26, at St. Michael Church. The main order of business was to review the meetings with the three school boards (St. Joseph Waite Park, Saint Joseph Lab School, and Ss. Peter, Paul and Michael). All the meetings were fruitful and a difficult but important time of sharing information about the situation of our Catholic schools. The committee felt afterward that the board members had a better idea of the financial and demographic reality of the schools and how the schools' financial picture interacts with the parishes. Additionally, committee members heard about the strengths of the various school programs, as well as the board members' concerns and commitment to Catholic education in our area.

Similar meetings will now be planned for the parish and school communities. From discussion with the boards, it was clear what kind of information might be helpful to present to parishioners and parents.

The committee also began moving into the next phase of our project, by undertaking an exercise that looks at the various possibilities for moving forward and affirms the values and creative ideas being brought forth by parents and committee members. The committee plans to put forward more than just a recommendation related to the consolidation question. We believe in taking a both-and approach, looking at the necessity of building a solid and sustainable set of schools for the long term. For that reason, we welcome the ideas for school growth, efficiencies and other suggestions that will build strong Catholic schools in our communities. As the meetings in the parishes are announced, we encourage people to bring forth ideas.

Interested parishioners can also make suggestions by email to cssg2010@charter.net. All responses will be considered by the Study Group.