

New School Board Optimistic with School Consolidation

The parish schools of Saint Michael, Saint Joseph-Waite Park, Saint Joseph-St. Joseph, Saint Paul and Saint Peter have begun work to create a new model for delivering Catholic education. The first new school board meeting was held January 19. Tom Jansen, diocesan attorney, presented information on incorporating a school. Because multiple parishes are involved in forming this new school system, it was recommended that the school become incorporated for legal and accounting purposes.

Given all the issues that need to be considered, the time line for implementation of this new Catholic school system has been adjusted. Decisions regarding the school's name, marketing, mission and philosophy will be made this spring. Next fall, business functions will be determined and by midwinter of 2012 decisions will be made regarding tuition rates, budgets, and personnel. The goal is to have the school corporation officially in place by July 2012. At that time, the new school system will operate as one school with multiple locations.

A transition team made up of parents, school staff and principals will assist the school board. Subcommittees will be formed to address finances, organizational structure, human resources, marketing/development, and facilities. They will look at how to best consolidate services and find efficiencies while retaining the unique attributes of each school community. Their goal is to develop one school with multiple locations that will offer superior programs, be affordable, and instill the Gospel message of Jesus.

For this upcoming 2011-2012 school year, the three schools will continue to operate their facilities much as they always have. Although preliminary registration has begun at Saint Joseph Waite Park School, Saint Joseph Lab School, and Saint Peter, Paul, and Michael School, official registration will take place the week of February 14.

There is much optimism with moving ahead in creating this new Catholic school system. The school board has highly motivated, talented parents who, with the help of the transition team, will undoubtedly create an effective model of Catholic education for the five cooperating parishes. The members of the school board from each parish are listed below.

Saint Michael: Lisa Kuhn, David Eickhoff, Kyle Wahlin

Saint Joseph, Waite Park: Kathy Walsh, Rose Larson, Robin Nelson

Saint Joseph, St Joseph: Claudia Revermann, Mike Meyer, Pam Nydeen

Saint Paul: Jackie Burns Miley, Kerby Plante, Mike Petroske

Saint Peter: Patrick Conn, Kathryn Theisen, Brian Schoenborn