



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

EXCELLENCE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

St. Joseph School News

May 31, 2010

New Pre-School Filled to Capacity

The idea of adding a Pre-School to St. Joe's began many years ago and we are pleased that it will now become a reality. Our school will expand by 40 new students in September 2010 when our new Pre-School begins its first year. Demand for our 3 year-old and 4 year-old programs was high and we expect full enrollments for each class.

The Pre-School will be led by Caroline Hanes, who joins us from the Madison School in the Lombard District 44 Early Childhood Program. Mrs. Hanes is a state certified teacher and also serves as a volunteer religious education teacher at her parish in Lombard.

Mrs. Hanes will be assisted by Kathy Pranckus. Mrs. Pranckus is currently the head teacher of an early Pre-School program in Oak Brook. She has also been a volunteer religious education teacher at St. Joe's for many years.

The Language Arts curriculum for the Four Year Old students will be *Happily Ever After*. A literacy program developed by the Rowland Reading Foundation, *Happily Ever After* is designed to give our children the foundation they need to be successful when they begin formal reading instruction. Our Kindergarten teacher, Ms. Cherney, reviewed the program and believes it will be a perfect introduction to our Kindergarten curriculum. <http://www.rowlandreading.org/>

We are extremely grateful to many people too numerous to mention who have supported our effort to establish this new program at our school. Special thanks to Father Jerome, Sister Dorothy, Mrs. Stasi, Matt Fosket, and John Economou for their vision and boots on the ground work. Special thanks also to Bishop Sartain for approving this expansion of our school.



St. Joe's Financial Update

The following information includes data for both the school year that is ending (2009/2010) and the school year that will begin next September (2010/2011).

It is very clear that our school is funded through the generosity of parish and school families. The money we use to pay for teachers, textbooks, and new programs is your money and, as a result, your School Board believes transparency about financial matters is very important. If you would like more information or have any questions about this data, please contact any member of the School Board and we would be happy to discuss at length.

As in the past, all families will receive a letter in late June explaining the process for tuition, stewardship and development obligations for the upcoming school year.

Enrollment

We expect next year's enrollment (2010/11 school year) to be at least 413 students in K-8. This figure represents an increase of +8 students from our current enrollment of 405 students (2009/10 school year). It also represents our fourth year in a row of increasing enrollment. We are pleased to report that our incoming Kindergarten class will be the largest since the 2002/03 school year.

Budget Overview

Total projected expenses for next year (2010/11 school year) are \$2,038,617, which is 3.4 percent higher than this year (2009/10 school year).

The primary drivers behind the increase are teacher salaries and benefits, which are expected to increase by 5 percent (set by the Diocese) and account for 80 percent of our total operating budget.

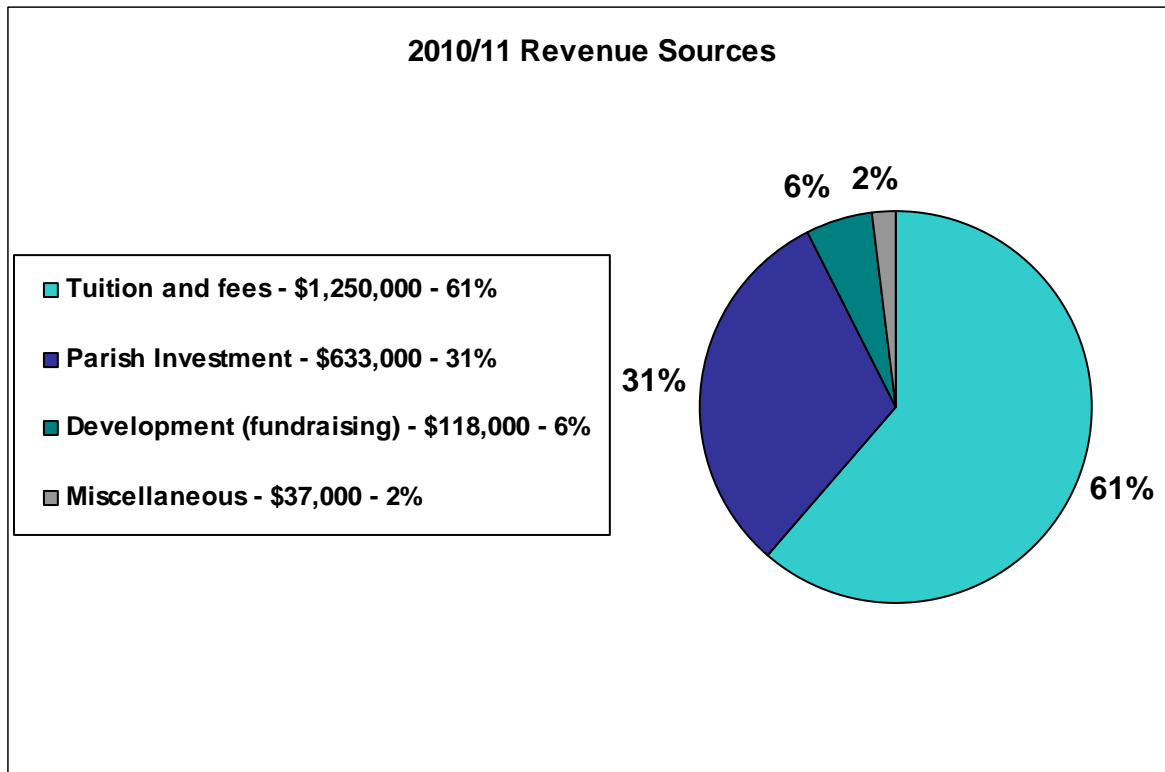
The cost per student at St. Joe's is approximately \$5,000 ($\$2,038,617$ operating expenses/ 413 students = $\$4,936$ per student).



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The revenue sources used to pay for our school for the 2010/11 school year are consistent with the 2009/10 school year and are illustrated in the following chart:



Tuition

As you can see, tuition accounts for \$1.25 million (61%) of our revenue. As a result of the increase in our costs, tuition for next year will increase by +3% for grades 1 through 8. Depending on the number of children you have enrolled at St. Joe's, your tuition will increase between \$110 for one child (about \$0.61 per day) to \$230 for four children (about \$1.28 per day).



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The tuition schedule for next year is:

<u>Enrollment Category</u>	<u>Tuition for Parish Families</u>
3 Yr Pre-School (cost per child enrolled)*	\$ 1,250
4 Yr Pre-School (cost per child enrolled)*	\$ 1,750
Kindergarten (cost per child enrolled)*	\$ 1,750
* above costs are in addition to below rates, if applicable	
1 child enrolled in grade 1-8	\$ 3,777
2 children enrolled in grades 1-8	\$ 5,665
3 children enrolled in grades 1-8	\$ 6,987
4 children enrolled in grades 1-8	\$ 7,554
5 children enrolled in grades 1-8	\$ 7,932

Notes:

1. All families also required to pay \$300 Development Fee.
2. Non-parish families pay \$5,250 per enrolled child.

We have analyzed our tuition costs, including Pre-School, Kindergarten, and elementary school, and compared our rates with our neighboring schools. In every case, we believe that the fully loaded cost (tuition plus fees) is equal to or lower than the costs charged by our neighboring schools.

Our growing enrollment helps to maintain our tuition at very reasonable levels, despite rising costs, higher tuition assistance, and reduced parish subsidy of the school. It is essential that we continue to maintain and grow our enrollment in the coming years.



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Multi-Child Discount / Tuition Assistance

In an effort to maintain the accessibility of Catholic education for all income levels, we will continue our multi-child discount program during the 2010/11 school year. This program provides families with multiple children a reduced rate for each additional child sent to St. Joseph's. It is a form of tuition assistance. We project tuition discounts provided to families with multiple children enrolled at St. Joe's will total \$258,000 during the upcoming school year.

In addition, we will continue our tuition assistance program for those who qualify by need. This year (2009/10), we provided \$64,000 in assistance to 26 families. Next year (2010/11), we are budgeting \$70,000 for this form of tuition assistance.

The application process for tuition assistance for next year is currently in process and all families received a letter recently about the program and how to apply. Please contact Sister Dorothy, Father Jerome, or Beth Harbauer (bharbauer@stjosephdg.org) with any questions about the application and review process.

Stewardship/Parish Investment

The 2010/11 parish investment of \$633,000 is funded through Sunday stewardship collections from school and parish families. This investment pays 31 percent of school expenses and represents 42 percent of the entire Sunday collections at St. Joseph parish.

As a result, it is extremely important that we as school families continue steadfastly in our generous support of the parish. Based on guidance received from the Diocese, the two thirds/one third stewardship sharing between the parish and school that was in place under the previous three year financial plan has ended. However, the generous support of the school by the parish will continue as outlined above (42 percent of parish Sunday collections are invested in the school).

We are also working to meet a new Diocesan guideline whereby each parish's investment in its school does not exceed 25 percent of the school's operating budget. Although the parish's share of school operating expenses has declined significantly over the past several years from over 40% to 31%, we will not meet this Diocesan 25% guideline in 2010/11. Therefore, we will seek and expect to receive a waiver from the Diocese. We are also working with school and parish leaders to develop a long range plan that addresses this guideline and also helps to ensure St. Joe's long term viability.



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Development (i.e. Fundraising)

Our 2009/10 Development activities will contribute \$118,000 or 6% of the school revenues to the 2010-2011 budget. This is a significant revenue source for our school and therefore we will maintain the \$300 minimum per family commitment program (no increase).

Please do all you can to meet this obligation as our fundraising/development efforts are an integral component of financing the school as well as providing for enhancements to our children's education.

We will also maintain the many unique, non-cash ways to offset your development commitment through the sale of raffle tickets, participation in certain events, etc.. More information on the Development program will be included in our forthcoming tuition letter.

Second Century Fund

The Second Century Fund remains a vital mechanism to fund our school and we are fortunate that our parish and school families continue to give generously. During the 2009/10 school year, the Fund collected \$535,000 in revenue, but we spent \$541,000 and the Fund experienced a slight decline in value.

We expect the Fund to have a total balance of approximately \$815,000 at the end of this school year.

The sources of the Fund during the past year included a portion of school family stewardship (i.e., Sunday church contributions), development/fundraising proceeds, the Annual Appeal, and explicit gifts to the school. Uses of the Fund during the past year included tuition assistance, multi-child discounts, pre-school startup costs, spring break bonuses for our teachers, discretionary offset of school operating expenses, and certain pre-approved capital expenditures. In addition, in the past few years, monies in the Second Century Fund have been used for the purchase of new computers/technology and books.

The sources and uses of the Fund will change next year because school family stewardship will no longer be directed to the Second Century Fund, but rather included as part of the parish's total investment in the school. Even with this change, the Fund is expected to continue to be the principal source for tuition assistance, spring break teacher bonuses, academic/ technology enhancements, and also to serve as discretionary offset of operating expenses of the school.



Tuition Credit Program

The School Board is currently working on the development of a tuition credit program for next year. More information will follow in the coming months.

Are You Smarter than a St. Joe's Kid?

St. Joe's has a rich tradition of developing award-winning science projects and this year was no exception. Our students again received recognition for their work at the Illinois Junior Academy of Science Region 11 Science Fair hosted by the University of St. Francis in Joliet.

Each year, young scientists from Catholic and private schools (Grades 7-12) pursue specialized fields of science by working on individualized research projects, either as part of their core curriculum or through independent study. These projects broaden scientific awareness and allow students to delve deeply into areas of their own special interests -- giving them a chance to explore, to gather information, to arrive at conclusions and to present ideas in a competitive public forum.

Guided by Mrs. Erin Van Iderstine and Mrs. Michelle DeBrueler, eight projects from St. Joe's received awards in Region 11. Six projects received gold awards and two received silver awards. The gold winners got the chance to present their work at the State Science Fair hosted at the University of Illinois. At this event, each of our budding scientists received a second gold award at State for their work.

The students with the winning projects were:

Sarah Barrett and Grace Fleming: Wind Takes a Toll on How Far a Ball Will Roll

Jonathan Blanchard: Instrument Accuracy

Sarena Martinez & Erin Gentile: Sip All Day & Get Decay: The Tooth About Soda Pop

Kelly O'Brien and Nicole Zolman: Stain, Stain, Go Away!

Paul Wagner: Does Mass Affect the Speed of a Maglev System?

Emma Welsh and Elizabeth Malone: Race to the Finish

Emma Brezezinski & Emily Hodshire: One Step to a Greener Future

Charles Kovarik: Carbonated Cleaners



March with St. Joe's in the Downers Grove July 4th Parade!

St. Joe's Centennial Celebrations continue on July 4th with a march down Main Street in the annual Downers Grove Fourth of July Parade. Send your kids, bring your friends, and march yourself to celebrate our country's independence and St Joe's 100th year. All parish and school families as well as alumni are welcome!

During the parade, the Centennial Committee will have our kids pass out wrapped hard candy to the throngs that line the street. Our kids will enjoy throwing the candy to the crowd in paper candy bags that are red, white and blue. . . and of course, green!

Candy donations may be brought to the collection boxes inside the school doors. Plans are also in the works for a St. Joseph School float.

Please continue to check the eMessenger for more details regarding the float construction and meeting times.

The Future of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Joliet

In Fall 2008, the Diocese of Joliet began a strategic planning process to assess the current situation facing its Catholic schools and to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure their continuing Catholicity, excellence and availability. The Diocese hired Meitler Consultants, Inc. to direct the planning initiative and the consultants have written two related reports.

The first report was written in October 2009 and focused on describing the current state of Catholic schools in the Diocese. The report was based on demographic data and tours of the facilities at each school as well as interviews with school pastors, administrators, and school board members. It contained many observations about our current situation including, most importantly, that preserving and growing Catholic education is a priority for Bishop Sartain. The report also included sobering facts such as Diocesan elementary enrollment declined almost 2,000 students or 11% since the 2003/04 school year. It served as a vivid reminder that we at St. Joes must continue to focus on all aspects of our school to help ensure St. Joe's viability for our children and for future generations.

The second report was a draft set of recommendations issued in October/November 2009 and later revised in January 2010. The recommendations, if implemented, will be far-reaching and impactful.



They included:

- A vision for thriving Catholic school education, including Catholic identity, academic excellence, school leadership, and enrollment/financial management.
- Thoughts about the appropriate role of the Diocese in helping parishes manage their schools.
- The identification of specific schools that should be closed as well as geographic areas where the Diocese should consider building new schools.
- How schools should be governed and ideas for managing school facilities.

From a St. Joe's perspective, we were concerned about language in the original draft that suggested we "anticipate a transition to one class per grade" as well as "the future possibility of joining with St. Mary of Gostyn to operate as a multi-parish school."

The School Board and Father Jerome presented the story of St. Joe's current strength and growth to the Diocese (and to you in our December 2009 letter) and are pleased to report that the language above was removed from the final report. Instead, the recommendations most directly affecting St. Joe's that were included in the final report consist of an affirmation that St. Joe's should continue to operate as a parish school, support for our decision to open a new Pre-School, and common sense approaches to coordinate and work more closely with St. Mary's and Divine Savior.

The third report is expected to address how to pay for the recommendations in the second report. We do not believe this report has been written yet, but will certainly communicate its contents to you when we receive a copy.

The SJS Legacy, Our Alumni

During the past school year, we laid the foundation to locate and reconnect with thousands of St. Joseph School alumni whose time at SJS spans more than nine decades. Our St. Joseph School graduates have positively impacted the world, creating a lasting legacy. Our history truly consists of the stories of each special child that received their education at St. Joe's.

While we celebrated our Centennial, the Alumni Committee made tremendous progress towards building an active, supportive Alumni Association to work hand-in-hand with the school in coming years. With the help of more than forty alumni and school volunteers, we have created a database of close to



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4,500 alumni, former teachers and Sisters. Many alumni are also stepping up to be their Class Representatives and take a lead role in building support amongst their former classmates.

For the first time ever, the Committee mailed out alumni newsletters, **The Crusader Legacy**. We traveled around the world to find alumni, many of whom are dedicated to social causes, like Sharon Saxelby ('71), the President and CEO of the Catholic nonprofit organization, **Friends of the Orphans** and Annie Boyd ('99), a social worker in El Salvador. With every week we reconnect with more alumni who share the many ways the lessons they learned at St. Joe's stay with them, helping them with careers and guiding them in life. Our alumni are proud of their ties to St. Joe's and we are proud of them!

The Alumni Committee is thrilled to be welcoming many of our alumni and friends home during the weekend of September 10th, 2010. That weekend, our Alumni will celebrate St. Joe's first 100 years and help us build a foundation for the next 100.

The weekend will kick-off with a Centennial Gala at Drury Lane Friday night, September 10th – MC'd by SJS Alum and WGN anchor/reporter Marcella Raymond, followed by tours of the school and class gatherings on Saturday evening, September 11th. We will also encourage our alums to help cheer on our Volleyball and Football Crusaders on Sunday, September 12th.

The First Alumni Association Board is currently being formed. Please contact the Alumni Committee alumni@stjosephdg.org if you are an alumnus of St. Joseph School and would like to be part of the inaugural Board.

Special thanks for the hard work countless volunteers have put in to build our alumni base and find innovative ways to help ensure SJS continues our Mission well into the next Century.

PARENT FORUM

Our Parent Forum is the main auxiliary group of the school that performs and facilitates a combination of social, community-building and fundraising activities. The list below shows the many events that Parent Forum sponsors as well as the assistance it provides with necessary school operations, welcoming functions and fundraisers.

The funds raised by this group are an essential component of maintaining the quality we expect in our school. For example, the Gift Wrap sale held every year in early Fall, is the primary source of funds for new textbooks for our school.



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The Parent Forum organization relies on the support and participation of all school parents to help make its events and activities successful. In early August you will be contacted about ways you can get involved. Please heed the call to help make St. Joseph School a wonderful place to educate our children.

Please contact an incoming (2010-2011) Parent Forum Executive Board member if you have any questions about its programs or activities: Noreen Woods, President; Jessica Jaworski, Vice President; Kathy Gaydos, Secretary.

Social	Community Building	School Support /Information	Fundraiser
Pizza Fridays	Buddy Family	eMessenger	Gift Wrap
Hot Lunch	K Round Up	Paper Messenger	Market Day
Room Parents	K Orientation	School Directory	Promotions
Fun Fair	Catholic Schools Week	Copy Aides	Book Fair Scheduling
Father Daughter	Goodwill/Seniors	Message Board	Manna Scheduling
Mother Son	Picture Parent/Publicity	Yearbook	
	Christmas Program	Lunchroom	
	VIP	Playground	
	Social/Hospitality (various events)	School Supplies	
		Gym Uniform	
		Picture Day	
		Vision Screening	
		Hearing Screening	
		Service Pins	

Crusader Sports Going Strong!

St. Joe's "no-cut" sports program offers students in fifth through eighth grades the opportunity to learn and play sports, build friendships, learn team and leadership skills and most of all, have fun.

This past school year included many new friendships, team championships, and good fun. Our Athletic and Booster Committee looks forward to another successful year and is excited for the Volleyball and Football seasons to start this coming Fall.



We encourage our School families to come out and support our teams.

Our Home Volleyball games are played on Friday nights as well as Saturday and Sunday afternoons in the School Gym. For our Football team, our Home games are played on Sundays at Montini High School (10 am JV and 1 pm Varsity). Our Home Football dates are 9/12, 9/26, 10/3 (Homecoming), and 10/10.

Go Crusaders!

Our Marketing Committee

The Marketing Committee continued to execute its long-term Marketing Plan with minimal financial investment required. Accomplishments and continued efforts include:

Enrollment promotion and Open House materials

Preschool identity, promotion and communications support

Development campaigns for:

- Golf Classic
- Grand Raffle
- Green Pages
- Manna
- Tailgate Trot & Party
- Trivia Night

Ongoing communications support for:

- Administration
- Alumni Committee
- Annual Appeal
- Centennial Committee
- Directory and first-ever Online Directory
- School Board
- SpiritWear designs
- Web site