



# NORTH HILLS REGIONAL CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

800 Avila Court, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

(412) 837-1056

November 20, 2017

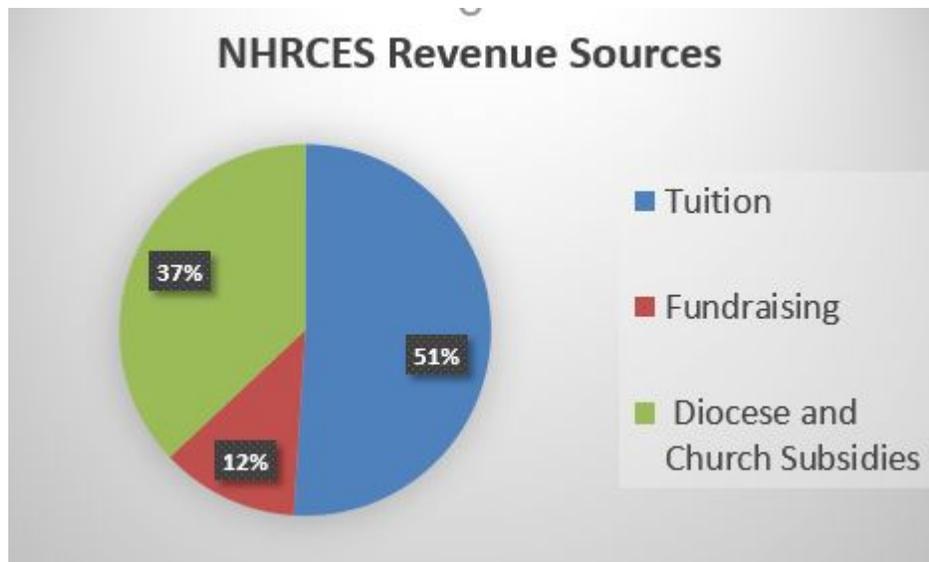
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Although we are only a few months into this academic year, the Board of Directors of the North Hills Regional Catholic Elementary Schools already is talking about plans and funding for the 2018-19 school year. The latest board meeting was held on Oct. 25 at the NHRCES regional office, located on the campus of St. Teresa of Avila in Perrysville.

## **Fundraising and Subsidies**

We continue to monitor the financials for the regional schools to ensure that we deliver a high-quality, faith-filled education for our children in a cost-effective manner.

Despite the necessary increase in tuition for the 2017-2018 school year, tuition revenue only covers 51% of operating costs. Fundraising revenue, which cannot be understated, represents another 12% for a total contribution from the school community of 63%. The remaining 37% is provided through parish and diocesan subsidies.



For the current school year, most of the income from parish subsidies is coming from the original North Hills parishes with schools. The subsidy balance comes from a diocesan grant – these are funds from parishes that historically have not had schools. They are assessed 10% of their income annually for Catholic education.

In years past, the majority of students at a Catholic elementary school belonged to the parish that supported the school. Today we are truly a regionalized school system as the students at our regionalized schools come from parishes throughout the entire North Hills area.

Fundraising is essential to our revenue mix. Our School Advisory Councils have already begun, or will soon begin, planning and executing fundraising plans. We are grateful for this incredibly important work.

As we continue to move forward in our regionalization process, each school's School Advisory Council will have access to the critical financial information needed for budgeting / fundraising concerns.

It is important to note that this information will reflect the current estimated breakdown of revenue sources. The fundraising and subsidy needs may require adjustment – up or down – depending on our exploration of additional support from other parishes in this regionalized Catholic education effort.

All of us who manage our own household budget can appreciate the fact that the incoming funds must balance the outgoing funds. The board is focused on working to manage this balance as closely as possible.

As always, the involvement of our school families is vital and very much appreciated to achieve fundraising success and increase enrollment. These fundraising dollars have enabled the schools to moderate the tuition increases recently as well as in previous years.

Reducing the cost of goods and services and maximizing enrollment are two strategies to keeping tuition as low as possible per student. Maintaining financial stability for our regionalized schools requires the combined efforts of all involved in our Catholic elementary education system to diligently monitor costs, promote enrollment, and fundraise.

#### **In other business:**

**NHRCES Website** – NHRCES Regional Administrator Michael Killmeyer and Father Nick Vaskov, executive director of communications for the diocese, reported the NHRCES website continues to be updated and refined. Hosted by e-Catholic, the NHRCES website serves as an umbrella under which each school has its own space. A few considerations for your reference:

- **Design and Logo:** A newly designed shield on the site incorporates a book and cross. The latest version of the NHRCES website – which is live now – has a blue background, which is what the principals of the schools had requested.

- **Web Content/ Functionality:** Each school's site is unique to that school with tabs, quick links, news feed, etc. Overall, the website creation process has gone smoothly and the principals report it is easy to navigate and parent volunteers are providing support for ongoing maintenance. Please visit the site at NHRCES.org.

**Development Coordinator** – The NHRCES has advertised an opening for a part-time Advancement Coordinator position. The deadline for accepting applications was Oct. 30; interviews are under way and a hiring decision is expected by the end of November. The board expresses its appreciation for the work done by Tara Aiello, who spearheaded development efforts throughout the region since April.

**Sacramental Preparation and Reception** – Students preparing for sacraments will receive their preparation at their school, but will receive the sacrament at the parish where their family is registered. If a student wants to receive a sacrament at the parish with which the school is most closely affiliated, then the parents must ask their pastor to give written permission. This involves more coordination and communication than previously for Directors of Religious Education, principals, and teachers.

**Lease Agreements** – NHRCES Regional Business Manager Andrea Vescio has been meeting with parish and school personnel to discuss leasing arrangements. Each school-parish relationship regarding use of the facilities is different, so the leases will be different for each school. Nothing has been finalized yet.

**Four “Non-Merged” Schools** – Four non-merged schools – Northside Catholic School, Assumption School, Christ the Divine Teacher Academy and St. James School – are under the umbrella of the North Hills Regional Catholic Elementary Schools. At this time the board will begin to gather input from each local school community to inform decisions around the 2018-2019 academic year. Task forces at Northside Catholic and Assumption have been and continue meeting to discuss regionalization possibilities.

**NHRCES Board's Next Meeting** – Wednesday, Nov. 29, at 6 p.m. at NHRCES office at 800 Avila Court, Pittsburgh.

God Bless and Happy Thanksgiving!

NHRCES Board of Directors

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Matthew Petnuch, St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Perrysville (Vice President)  
Judene Indovina, Good Samaritan Parish, Ambridge (Secretary)  
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Rev. Robert J. Vular, Pastor, St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Perrysville  
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Rev. Paul J. Zywan, Pastor, St. Alexis Parish, Wexford  
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