



May 15, 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As this school year comes to an end, many people continue their dedicated efforts in our regionalization of Catholic elementary schools in the North Hills. At our meeting on May 2, the NHRCES Board of Directors discussed the following:

Development Consultant and Fundraising

Recognizing the immediate need for someone to collect information and begin to coordinate fundraising efforts amongst the seven parishes and schools that will be affected by the school mergers for the 2017-18 academic year, the board has reached an agreement with Mrs. Tara Aiello and she has already begun this critical task.

Tara has a background in this type of work. She is a St. Alphonsus parishioner, wife, and mother of two daughters who attend St. Alphonsus School. Tara has been working diligently and effectively to reach out to each community to gather information and feedback about their fundraising activities. From her research, she reported **three main thoughts/concerns** identified by the people with whom she spoke:

1. Clarity regarding where money raised at each school will be put to use.
2. The various gift card programs – which are identified by various names such as “Scrip” or “Manna” – need to be streamlined.
3. While gift cards will no longer offset family assessments, families are still strongly encouraged to purchase cards and participate in these fundraising programs to help manage the costs of education.

The board directed Tara to inform the people with whom she has been in contact that ***fundraising efforts, activities, and goals will remain for each new school, and the money raised will remain in their school community.***

In time, the hope is that there will also be regional fundraisers that will include efforts and participation from all of the parishes in the region.

Additionally, the board directed her to develop a streamlining proposal for the various gift card programs used by the schools. As stated above, the purchase of these cards remains critical to the overall financial situation of each school.

Of great importance is the parishes' vital need for income from summer fundraisers to ensure adequate cash flow when there is a distinguishable "summer months" gap in receiving tuition payments, yet the bills still need to be paid. This has historically been a challenge for parish schools. These fundraisers will require support from all regional school families across all parishes. The seven parish schools that will merge next year are still obligated by contract to pay teachers through August 2017. After that, the NHRCES nonprofit corporation will be responsible for handling the payroll for teachers and school employees.

Teacher Placements for 2017-18

Mike Killmeyer, Regional Administrator, noted that Friday, April 28, had been a difficult day for everyone because that is when faculty met with pastors and principals regarding teacher placements for the 2017-18 academic year. In a process set forth by the teachers' contract, 25 full-time teachers and 11 part-time teachers received layoff notices.

Currently, 180 full-time and part-time teachers are employed in 11 Catholic elementary schools in the North Hills region. Seven of the schools will merge into three schools with six campuses. Mr. Killmeyer noted that teacher employment is based on student registrations for the upcoming school year. If enrollment continues to increase, there is the possibility that some teachers may be recalled.

St. Sebastian/St. Teresa Principal

Mike Killmeyer and a search committee are in the process of interviewing candidates for the position.

Regional Business Manager

Mr. Killmeyer is beginning to interview candidates for the position.

School Names

Pastors presented the following name suggestions for the merged schools based on input from their communities. The names were submitted to Bishop Zubik on May 12. The bishop will make the final decision.

The **St. Mary/St. Ursula/St. Bonaventure** school merger offers the following names:

- First Choice: Blessed Trinity Academy – overwhelmingly the favorite, as it reflects the three schools coming together to form one.
- Second Choice: Glenshaw Catholic Academy – a distant second.

The **St. Alexis and St. Alphonsus** school merger offers the following names:

- First Choice: Wexford Catholic Academy – a strong, well-identified name that represents both communities equally well.

- Second Choice: Blessed Seelos Academy – as Francis Seelos ministered in this area.

The **St. Sebastian and St. Teresa** school merger offers the following names:

- First Choice: Holy Cross Academy – representing the ultimate sacrifice.
- Second Choice: St. Benedict Catholic Academy – as the Benedictine community has served the North Hills area.

Facilities Agreements

The board discussed the need for lease agreements between the NHRCES and parishes because the school buildings are the assets of the parishes. This will be discussed further after a business manager is hired.

We thank you for your prayers as we keep moving forward in faith in this unprecedented endeavor of regionalizing our Catholic elementary schools in the North Hills.

The next board meeting will be on June 7.

Yours in Christ,

NHRCES Board of Directors:

Rev. Kevin C. Fazio, Pastor, St. Alphonsus Parish, Wexford (President)
Matthew Petnuch, St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Perrysville (Vice President)
Judene Indovina, Good Samaritan Parish, Ambridge (Secretary)
Rev. John R. Rushofsky, Pastor, St. Sebastian Parish, Ross Twp.
Rev. Robert J. Vular, Pastor, St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Perrysville
Rev. Timothy F. Whalen, Pastor, St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Glenshaw
Rev. Paul J. Zywan, Pastor, St. Alexis Parish, Wexford
Anne Monteverde Haus, St. Alphonsus Parish, Wexford
Jane Ann Regan, St. Ursula Parish, Allison Park

Cc: Very Rev. Lawrence A. DiNardo, Vicar General/General Secretary
Dr. Michael Latusek, Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Dr. Lillian Naccarati, Assistant Superintendent
Michael Killmeyer, Regional Administrator
Sr. Patrice Hughes, Educational Consultant
Anna Torrance, Esq., Secretary for External Affairs