



Diocese of Pittsburgh

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Office of the Bishop

March 15, 2018

Reverend Kevin C. Fazio
President
North Hills Regional Catholic Elementary Schools, Inc.
Pastor, Saint Alphonsus Parish
201 Church Road
Wexford, PA 15090-8843

Dear Father Fazio:

This letter formally acknowledges receipt of the recommendation of the North Hills Regional Catholic Elementary School, Inc. (NHRCES) Board of Directors to merge Assumption and Northside Catholic Schools, effective for the 2018-2019 school year. This recommendation is based upon consultation with the pastors from Assumption Parish and the parishes that support Northside Catholic, the principals and parents of both schools, the NHRCES Regional Administrator and the Diocesan Department for Catholic Schools as well a task force specially convened to help determine the best possible way to continue to provide a Catholic school education for the children in the North Boroughs and Northside of Pittsburgh.

It is my understanding that the NHRCES Board came to its recommendation to merge the schools after careful review and assessment of parent survey results, financial budgets, the campus facilities, potential student retention and the impact of displacing faculty and administration. The NHRCES Board also relied on the work of the task force, composed of representatives from both Assumption and Northside Catholic Schools, and its conclusion that the merging of the two schools was essential to the well-being of Catholic education in these communities. The task force, in turn, asked the NHRCES Board to make an objective school site decision, for which the task force assured its full support. The NHRCES Board has indicated that the primary reasons for the selection of the Brighton Heights campus, as cited in correspondence to me, include overall better conditions at the Northside Catholic building and important amenities there, such as a gymnasium and integral cafeteria, which are not available at the Assumption campus.

In light of the above mentioned factors, and in view of the consultation process involving the task force, pastors, school administration, the Regional Administrator, the Diocesan Department of Catholic Schools and many others, the Members of NHRCES do hereby approve the recommendation of the NHRCES Board of Directors to merge Assumption and Northside Catholic Schools, effective for the 2018-2019 school year. In doing so, the NHRCES Members

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would like to recognize the dedication of parishioners, parents and teachers who have, for over 100 years, so beautifully supported Catholic education for generations of students at the Assumption School.

This approval is granted with the clear understanding that every effort be made to assist the children of parishioners at Assumption Parish and the Northside Parishes with the transition to this newly merged school. It is also understood that the parishes will continue to support Catholic schools and adhere to the diocesan policy for financing elementary schools. It must be clear that students supported by the Extra Mile Education Foundation will continue to have the opportunity for a Catholic education available to them. Finally, it is my understanding that the NHRCES Board will request that the task force convene once more to bring forth for my consideration a name for the newly merged school program.

I am grateful to the NHRCES Board's steadfast commitment to the mission of Catholic elementary education and the efforts to assure the continued success of our schools for generations to come.

Grateful for our efforts together in being *On Mission for the Church Alive!*, and for our belief that "Nothing is Impossible with God," I am

Your brother in Christ,

+ 

Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

DAZ:jkb

cc: Most Reverend William J. Waltersheid, VG
Very Reverend Lawrence A. DiNardo, VG
Reverend Dennis M. Buranosky
Reverend Lawrence R. Smith
Reverend David D. DeWitt
Reverend James R. Orr
Reverend Vincent E. Zidek, OSB
Ms. Anne Monteverde Haus
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