



Faith and knowledge together.

Holy Rosary School
St. James Catholic School
St. John's School
St. Michael's Lakeside School
St. Rose School

Progress Report: September-October 2010

The wonderful thing about our academic calendar is its predictable ebb and flow. During the first weeks of school, students become familiar with school operations and classroom routines. Parents and students learn ways to become involved in their school communities and to promote their school missions.

Duluth Area Catholic Schools came together at the beginning of October to celebrate the Mass. Students from our five campuses participated in a beautiful liturgy with Bishop Paul Sirba as the main celebrant, joined by area pastors. After Mass, Bishop Sirba, pastors, and principals enjoyed coffee and fellowship. Another early activity that nonpublic school students across Minnesota support is the Marathon for Nonpublic Education. Although the title denotes a marathon, our local schools have chosen to include a strong community service component, picking up trash and beautifying their neighborhoods in exchange for pledges. This is one of our most important fundraisers because all profits go directly to the schools.

Late in August, Bishop Sirba met with pastors of supporting parishes, School Board members, and principals of Duluth Area Catholic Schools to articulate his support for the system and to address their questions or concerns. Participants appreciated the meetings and plan to continue these conversations. Pastors promised their support and pledged financial commitment to Duluth Area Catholic Schools.

The School Board met October 7 and voted to provide each school with \$3,000 for tuition assistance. It also approved a Marketing and Communications budget for the 2010-2011 school year. In addition to its regular budget, the Marketing and Communications Committee is working with the Development Committee to fund a special Web site project that will provide information about all of our schools in one cohesive site. A grant from Catholic Aid Association will cover a portion of the project.

Invitations to the Dinner for Catholic Education have been mailed and responses are being received. The dinner will be held November 7, 2010, at Northland Country Club. All parents and parishioners are encouraged to attend. You may obtain information by calling Shawna at the Diocese of Duluth (724-9111) or shansen@dioceseduluth.org.

The Strategic Planning process continues. A comprehensive analysis of the current situation has been completed with reports by Cynthia Zook on the state of general and Catholic school education; Fr. James Bissonette regarding how Catholic schools fit into the future planning of the diocese; and the five principals highlighting their individual schools. Committee members have completed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis and are beginning to identify key issues and opportunities. They also are developing a Values Statement to guide the system. To stay informed, watch the "news" page at www.duluthcatholicschools.org.

The next school board meeting is Thursday, December 2, 6:30 p.m., at the Pastoral Center. Visitors are welcome to attend.