

# Welcoming Schools Webinar

November 2014

# Opening Prayer

Good and gracious God, as disciples of Your Son Jesus we have sat at Your feet as we have grown in wisdom and knowledge of the great gift of faith and its power in our lives.

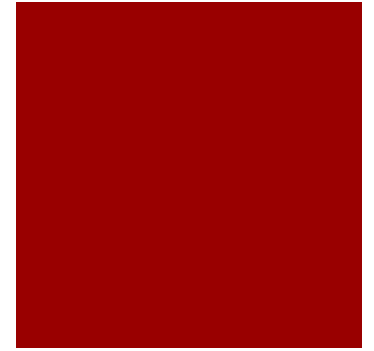
We have sat at the feet of loving parents, grandparents and guardians who taught us through prayer, word and faithful lives.

We have sat at the feet of priests and ministers who shared Your Word as they have connected its power to our daily living.

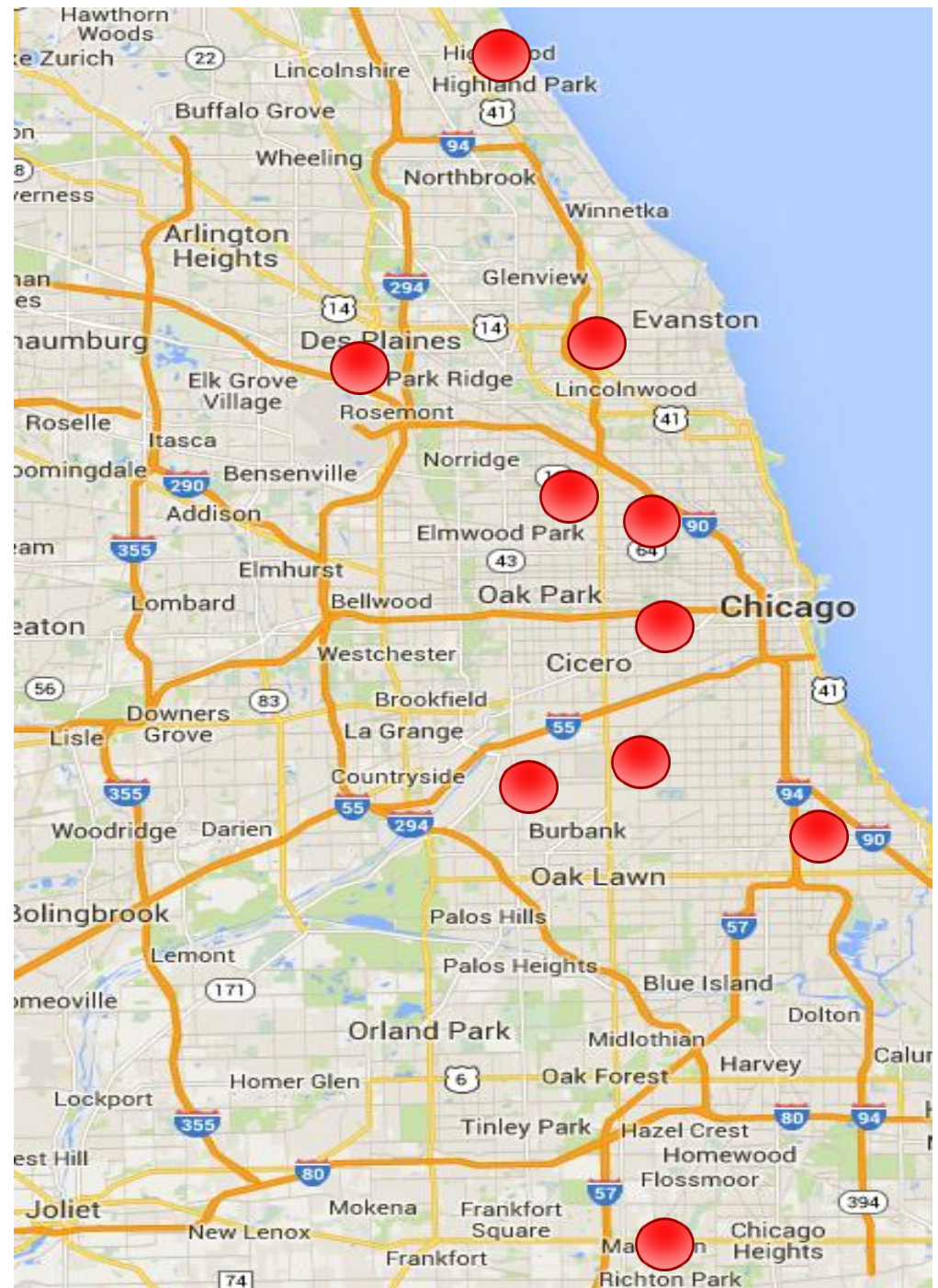
We have sat at the feet of teachers and catechists, religious and lay men and women who have instructed us and helped form us in the faith.

God of life, death and resurrection, we pray for the children, parents, teachers, administrators, parishioners and pastors of our parish schools, especially those who are enduring the pain of closing. We know that You mourn this loss with all of us. –

***excerpt from Fr. Larry Dowling's Prayer of Thanksgiving, Sadness and Hope - Life, Death and Resurrection for Our Catholic Schools and Catholic Education***



# Geographic Snapshot of Schools Impacted



# Recruitment of New Students, Enrollment, Tuition and Marketing



- System goal remains:  
More Kids in Great Catholic Schools
  - We need to be shepherds and friendly faces for families in transition
- Goal of today's webinar: to align on best practices around welcoming new families
  - Need to remain consistent in approach and procedures



# Mid-Year Transfers?

*If Students and Families want to leave their current school in the middle of the current year, how should I manage their inquiry/interest?*

- **Goal is to keep families enrolled in their current school to finish the academic year**
  - We believe that this is best for students, families and the school
- **If you receive an inquiry, you should respond with something along the lines of:**

*"We are eager for you to learn about the great things at our school; over the course of coming weeks and months, we will be hosting open houses, general tours, individual tours, and other welcoming events; we do encourage you to consider keeping your child at your current school for the remainder of this year"*

- **If you receive an inquiry, you should contact the incumbent Principal immediately**

# Mid-Year Transfers?



## *If a family is determined to leave mid-year:*

- The current Principal should be the one to lead the coordination and confirmation the family's/student's determination, interest and fit with a different school
- Principals from (potentially) Welcoming Schools must coordinate with current Principal and family to confirm the Welcoming School is indeed a good fit
  - Can/will “Welcoming School” meet the academic/other needs of the student?

# Mid-Year Transfers?

*In all situations, a “Welcoming School” Principal should only accept a family in middle of school year if:*

- *Both Principals and the family together meet in person to evaluate, discuss and resolve the potential transition.*
- *The family in question is current on their tuition/fees payments, and otherwise in good standing with the current school*

# Mid-Year Transfers?

## ***IF TRANSFERS OCCUR DURING 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR.***

- Students won't be accepted into any "Welcoming School" -- mid-year or after year-end -- unless they are in good standing at their current school for academics, behavior and finances.
  - Families are "current" on their tuition, if they've paid the pro-rated amount of tuition due through date of transfer.
  - Receiving schools should charge their own tuition rates to families on pro-rated basis, starting from date of transfer
- Fees paid to the current school are not refundable.
  - Receiving schools should charge new families fees as they do for any mid-year transfer
- Both Principals need to know the terms, published rate of tuition, needs-based discounts and existing scholarships that are offered to the families (e.g., Caritas, local awards, Big Shoulders Fund scholarships etc.)



# Mid-Year Transfers?

## ***IF TRANSFERS OCCUR DURING 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR.***

- The Welcoming School needs to understand the academic profile of any new student.
  - Not for screening students but to ensure a successful transition
- If a family leaves a school mid-year to a public school, the current school should only send transcripts if the family is in good standing.
  - In the instances where families are not in good standing and leave the school, schools still need to send public schools “unofficial transcripts”
  - Principals can follow up with Archdiocese Legal Dept. to obtain assistance in collecting unpaid tuition from departed families (see Administrators’ Handbook under “Tuition”)

# Enrolling New Students

- Enrolling new students can lead to more sustainable operations and a more vibrant school community, but we must enroll students in a responsible manner
- Welcoming Schools will need to convince parents that:
  - Larger class sizes can and do provide more resources and a better academic and social education
  - Regardless of class size, their child will get personalized attention



# Enrolling New Students

*Is there a limit to the number of students I should accept (from an impacted school or any other location)?*

- **YES!** All schools should fill their existing sections only to capacity.
- If demand for seats exceeds section capacity, a new section or additional staff **should not** be hired until the next section is full or at least generates enough revenue to cover the total cost
  - As wait lists expand, RDs need to confirm the addition of new staff to open up sections
- Need to strike a balance between i) serving our families, ii) academic excellence and iii) fiscal responsibility

# Enrolling New Students

*How many students constitute a full section?*

- Each site and each classroom may have unique fire and health code restrictions
- Schools may also have programmatic restrictions on the maximum number of students they can reasonably serve in a section

# Enrolling New Students

- **There will be complex issues to manage...**

*Scenario: New family comes to enroll with 3 children. One child is in a grade that is at full capacity.*

- **Goal:** to identify the best compromise between the desires of the parents to enroll their child + the desire to maximize enrollment + the need to run an effective classroom.
  - Families from impacted schools should be exposed to at least 2-3 options as they seek to find the best Catholic school
  - If wait lists are established, families from impacted schools should have preference over other families.
- **In any case: Contact OCS**
  - OCS Regional Director will work with you and the parents and other “Welcoming School” principals to find the best option and solution

# Tuition for 2015-16 and beyond

## Key Principles

- Welcoming Schools will be enrolling students from impacted schools into **otherwise empty seats**.
- Any new tuition revenue (even if less than what “Welcoming Schools” usually charge) will be an incremental improvement to each “Welcoming School’s” bottom line.
- Tuition accommodations are deployed in spirit of easing the burden of closed school/transition to our fellow Catholic school families
- “Welcoming Schools” – up front -- need to be clear to families on how tuition & fees will be charged beyond year 1





# Tuition for 2015-16 and beyond

*What tuition/fee rates should “Welcoming Schools” offer to families/students from affected schools?*

- Year 1: The actual **Tuition & Fees Charged** to any student at their current school will be held constant for at least one year (2015-2016) at the “Welcoming School”
  - Parish Schools enforcing Non-Parishioner rate increase to students from impacted schools – contrary to this Archdiocesan procedure -- run their own risk of limiting enrollment into open seats.
  - Furthermore, OCS and the current school will not promote “Welcoming Schools” that do not honor this tuition arrangement



# Tuition for 2015-16 and beyond

*What tuition/fee rates should “Welcoming Schools” offer to families/students from affected schools?*

- Year 2 and beyond
  - In a consistent manner, across all Welcoming Schools, Principals -- up front -- must communicate their current/projected tuition & fee rates, financial aid policies & procedures; and tuition transition plan for families from impacted schools (and any other family)
  - This “Welcoming Schools” profile must be reviewed by RD before formal recruiting begins
- Template from St. Hyacinth-Welcoming School group coordination



# Tuition for 2015-16 and beyond

*What tuition/fee rates should “Welcoming Schools” offer to families/students from affected schools?*

- If Schools evaluate each family’s ability to pay with equal rigor, the differences between net invoiced tuition & fees of the two schools should be easy to manage.

		Published Tuition Rate	Total Fees	Justifiable Needs-Based Discounts				Net Invoiced Tuition & Fees
				Caritas Funded	BSF Funded	Other Funded	Unfunded	
Equal needs assessment	Current School	4000	500			800	0	3700
	Welcoming School	6500	600				3400	3700
Differing needs assessment	Current School	4000	500			800	0	3700
	Plus 5%							3885
	Plus 5%							4079
	Plus 5%							4283
	Welcoming School	6500	600				2800	4300



# Tuition for 2015-16 and beyond

*What tuition/fee rates should “Welcoming Schools” offer to families/students from affected schools?*

- Arch Policy 124
  - Some Parishes may be unable to fund the tuition support
  - Full enforcement may be a disincentive for Parishes to continue to send families/students to Catholic schools



# Tuition for 2015-16 and beyond

***What tuition/fee rates should “Welcoming Schools” offer to families/students from affected schools?***

- The “Welcoming School” must collaborate with families up front to explain how they’ll ease the family back onto the “Welcoming School’s” standard Published Tuition/Fees rate.
  - Depending on how Schools do or don’t evaluate “need” when charging net tuition, we recommend 3% annual increases in Tuition/Fees once the “Welcoming School” ends the freeze.
- All Caritas scholarships are portable and subject to annual renewal. Any family/student earning a Caritas scholarship will need to reapply through the Caritas program.

# Keeping Track of Student Transfers



- If you receive a student that transfers from any Catholic school – Principal must contact St. Ben's Tech Consortium (SBTC) Support and they will assist in the proper coding of the family in PowerSchool.
- **Contact info for SBTC: File a ticket online:**  
<http://techsupport.sbtcsupport.org/powerschool>
- **Or call (773) 509-3840**

# Marketing Your School

## A few reminders...

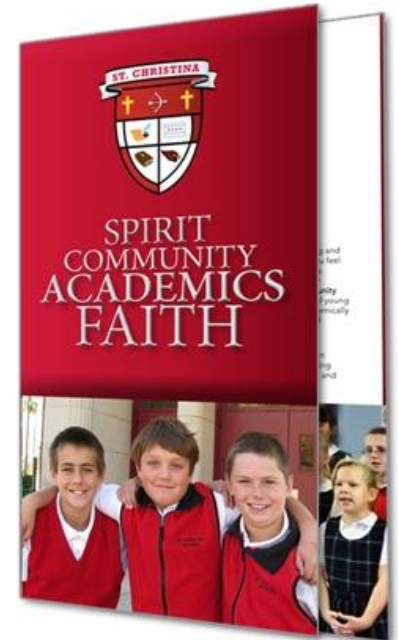
- Families are grieving and healing. Please continue to be respectful.
- ALWAYS keep open lines of communication with impacted principals.
- If you have a question, contact us!



# Marketing Your School

## Top Priorities:

- Strong Value Proposition
- Curb Appeal
- Events and Activities to Welcome New Families
- Ongoing Communications



# Marketing Your School

## Value Proposition

- What makes your school unique and special?
  - Catholic and safe are not acceptable answers to this question.
- Are your marketing materials branded? Do they articulate your value proposition?
  - School logo
  - Designed by a professional
  - High quality

More Resources:

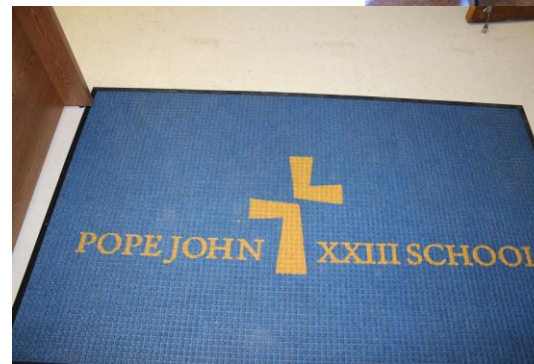
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# Marketing Your School

## Curb Appeal

- What does your school look like to an outsider?
  - Organize small committee of (new) parents to help
- Things to consider:
  - Entrance
  - Who is answering the phone?
  - Do you have a space for families to wait?
  - Parking
  - Cleanliness
- Need an outsiders' opinion? Call a friend!





# Marketing Your School



## Events and Activities

- Open Houses, Tours, Curriculum Nights, Shadow Days
  - Host something special JUST for the families of impacted schools
- 3 Steps
  - Prepping/Marketing the Event
  - Hosting the Event
  - Follow up After the Event
- Welcome Wednesdays
  - An opportunity to open your doors weekly to all new families
  - We will help to market this as a system
- More resources:
- [http://gallery.mailchimp.com/a09fbf4d2497886d386e21d4b/files/Tours\\_Open\\_Houses\\_Etc.pdf](http://gallery.mailchimp.com/a09fbf4d2497886d386e21d4b/files/Tours_Open_Houses_Etc.pdf)
- [http://gallery.mailchimp.com/a09fbf4d2497886d386e21d4b/files/Admissions\\_Protocols\\_Webinar.pdf](http://gallery.mailchimp.com/a09fbf4d2497886d386e21d4b/files/Admissions_Protocols_Webinar.pdf)

# Marketing Your School

## Events and Activities

- 3 Steps
  - Prepping/Marketing the Event
    - Curb Appeal, outreach, plan
  - Hosting the Event
    - Welcoming, current parent involvement
  - Follow up
    - Make it personal! Outreach from 5<sup>th</sup> grade class to 5<sup>th</sup> grade class etc



# Marketing Your School

## Ongoing Communications

*How can you continually reinforce your value proposition to your own families and your community?*

- **COMMUNICATION IS KEY**
  - Social media
  - Website
  - Newsletters /Push page
  - Parent Ambassadors



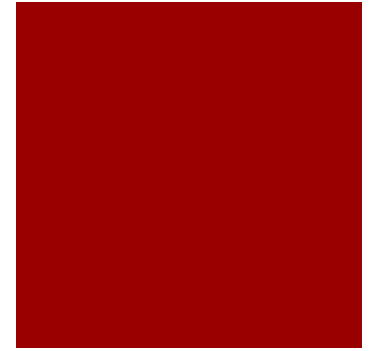
# Marketing Your School



## We are here to help.

- **Portal**
  - <http://ocs.archchicago.org/SchoolVitality/MarketingEnrollment.aspx>
- **Past Newsletters:**
  - <http://ocs.archchicago.org/Portals/23/newsletter%20topics.pdf>
- **Marketing Team:** *KK Cleland, Yasmin Quiroz, Juana Sanchez, Megan Sullivan Beenblossom*
- Maria's contact: 312-534-5334  
[mippolito@archchicago.org](mailto:mippolito@archchicago.org)

# Questions, Comments, Concerns



Thank you for joining us today. The Office of Catholic Schools is committed to assisting and supporting your efforts. We are available if you need anything.

# Contacts:

## **Superintendent of Schools**

Sr. Mary Paul McCaughey 312-534-5212

## **Chief Operating Officer**

Tom McGrath 312-534-5221

## **Associate Superintendent of Academics**

Mary Kearney 312-534-5255

## **Director of Catholic Identity & Mission**

Julie Welborn 312-534-8321

## **Director of Finance**

John Pantle 312-534-5230

## **Director of School Marketing & Communications**

Maria Ippolito 312-534-5334

## **Regional Directors**

Matt Banach 312-534-5340

Merry Quinn 312-534-5412

John Segvich 312-534-5213

Debra Sullivan 312-534-5226

Rev. Peter Wojcik 312-534-5248

## **Marketing Team**

KK Cleland 312-534-8307

Yasmin Quiroz 312-534-5361

## **Teacher Personnel**

Sr. Margaret Farley 312-534-5257

Jeanine Gouzeas 312-534-5231

Susan Rados 312-534-5233

## **Archdiocesan Support**

Human Resources 312-534-5360

Archives & Records 312-534-4400



We humbly ask for your prayers.

We encourage you to come together and support one another and we hope you will have the faith to provide the love and support your children will need to help in this transition.