

### ***Executive Summary:***

*As the population in the Greater Pittsburgh Region shifts from within the city limits to the burgeoning northern suburbs, services to families of school age children must also be redirected. With the significant numbers of school age children in the northern corridor of the diocese, including the recent opening of a brand new elementary school at St. Kilian Parish in Mars, a new state of the art Catholic high school in that region is being proposed. It is projected that this new high school would serve more than 1,000 students in grades 9-12 and would offer area families an academically excellent, faith-based secondary education, with tremendous opportunities for extra-curricular activities including sports programs. In addition, this new high school would assume a significant share of the burden of education costs for local public school districts, and offer additional community resources to residents.*



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### Demographics

The 10 year enrollment projections for Pittsburgh Public Schools for 2004-2014 anticipate a drop in student population of 33%.<sup>1</sup> North Allegheny, North Hills, and Pine-Richland school districts are projecting a 4% increase while in Butler County, the Mars Area and Seneca Valley school districts are slated for 14.3% and 15.4% increases respectively, for the same period.<sup>1</sup> In terms of overall numbers, this region currently boasts the 3 largest school districts in Western Pennsylvania: North Allegheny, Seneca Valley, and Butler. Strong and stable Catholic elementary schools such as St. Alphonsus, St. Sebastian, St. Alexis, Holy Sepulcher, St. Gregory, Butler Catholic and others have been joined this fall by St. Kilian Elementary School which has over 500 students enrolled in Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade with additional families on a waiting list. That school will eventually serve nearly 1000 students in pre-K through grade 8.

### Marianist Charism

With the building of a new, state of the art high school, North Catholic High School situated in the Troy Hill section of the City of Pittsburgh will close. Many of the parishes from the northern corridor currently have students at North Catholic High School but transportation challenges and other factors limit the number of students who can attend North Catholic. The new high school will incorporate the best of the North Catholic tradition, including the Marianist charism, an academic program designed to develop leadership skills in young men and women, preparing them to excel in a changing world even as they are grounded in family and faith. Many community leaders have graduated from North Catholic including the late Tom Foerster, retired Greensburg Bishop Anthony Bosco, current CIA Director General Michael Hayden, Steelers President Dan Rooney, County Executive Dan Onorato and Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, just to name a few.

In 2004, a Blue Ribbon Committee of Diocesan, School, and Community leadership recommended the relocation of North Catholic High School to better serve the shifting population base. It is important to note that while a growing population base in the northern suburbs would provide a significant student base for the new school, the plan to start a new Catholic high school will include aggressive efforts to continue to serve the students and their families who live in the City of Pittsburgh and come from the schools which have traditionally been “feeders” for the current North Catholic. This would include providing busing for students, tuition assistance for families in need and help in accessing extra-curricular activities and programs.

### Project Progress

A generous land donation from a North Catholic Alumnus served as the catalyst to begin the formal capital campaign to build this new school. Preliminary feasibility studies and a confirmed business plan enabled the school to achieve a commitment for a bond issue. As of August 15, 2008, the campaign has generated Cash Pledges of \$3.3M and In-Kind Pledges of \$1.5M. The current school building and land on Troy Hill are assessed at a minimum of \$1M, bringing the total campaign assets to \$5.8M.

Recently, a viable site in Adams Township has been located for the new school. The total cost of the project will be between \$40 and \$45 million. The site would be on 38 acres with a 95,000 square foot school. Besides the normal classrooms, auditorium/gymnasium, there would be a Chapel and an area for sports facilities. The possibility of a Green building is being explored as well as contributions that would allow LEED certification to be pursued. A real possibility for financing the project has been developed but the need exists to raise a minimum of \$3 million in cash donations within the next six month period for the site and financing proposal to proceed. This would allow the project to commence with the ability to open the facility in the 2010-2011 school year.

The building of a new state of the art Catholic secondary school in the growing northern corridor of the diocese, that will maintain the very best of North Catholic High School, represents an extraordinary and unique opportunity. This school and its program will not only help to produce many more community leaders for the future, but will also help to shape the lives of thousands of young people each year, enabling them to become faithful disciples and moral citizens impacting the Church and our community for generations to come.

September 17, 2008

<sup>1</sup> PA Department of Education 2008