



Kenosha Catholic Schools Alliance

Communication #4

March 9, 2021

Members of the various committees of the Kenosha Catholic Schools Alliance are hard at work gathering the necessary data to complete the group's tasks. We are studying population and demographic statistics, analyzing school financial information, surveying various constituencies and reaching out to learn from other schools, both inside and outside the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Emerging Challenges. As the KCSA's work has progressed toward fulfilling our charge - *Ensuring that excellent Catholic education will continue to be accessible, sustainable, and viable for all members of the Kenosha community who desire it well into a future beyond our own* – we have identified a few emerging factors that we are going to be working diligently to address:

- The overall enrollment in the two schools has been on a downward trend that mirrors enrollment challenges in Catholic schools across the country, the State of Wisconsin, and in the Kenosha Unified School District.

And yet, population projections predict the number of children in the 0-to-17-year-old group to significantly increase in the Kenosha area in the next 10 years. The KCSA will develop strategies to tap into this population expansion to grow our enrollment, potentially opening additional campuses and/or school models.

- ASCS and SJCA are both vibrant, successful schools. Currently there is competition for the same pool of prospective students, but there is opportunity for more meaningful collaboration. The KCSA is working to identify attributes, options, programs, systems, and differentiators to support long-range planning for the betterment of all students.
- Active participation in parishes is declining. Studies show that students who attend Catholic schools are significantly more likely to be active in the Church as young adults than students who attend public schools. Students who attend all the way from PreK through grade 12 are active in the greatest numbers. The KCSA will work collaboratively with our parishes to strengthen the participation of our families in the life of their parishes.
- While required reporting and auditing demonstrate that both ASCS and SJCA are fiscally responsible, the resources available to support parishes and schools are limited. The KCSA will encourage continued good stewardship of the current resources entrusted to us and look to cultivate additional resources to support our schools.

Survey Progress. The KCSA is also gathering data of its own through the use of surveys. We have completed, or are in the process of completing, surveys to three specific groups: (1) priests and deacons of the 10 supporting parishes; (2) employees of each school and members of their respective boards of directors; (3) current Kenosha Catholic school parents.

These are not the only groups the KCSA will be reaching out to, nor are surveys the only method that will be employed to better understand overall satisfaction, expectations, and areas of opportunity.

While we are not yet ready to publish any findings from the surveys, we would like you to understand how we will use the data:

- Define the current reality of each school.
- Understand and accept what the data is telling us.
- Pull out the main themes and prioritize how we approach them.
- Use the current reality data to influence the tasks of the committees.
- Use the data as a catalyst for further engagement.

Our current timeline calls for us to think of the “big picture” – as such we are not developing specific solutions just yet. Rather, we are developing an overarching strategy that we will be presenting to Archbishop ListECKi in May, asking for his blessing to move forward with the next steps in implementing the strategy.

Catholic schools in Kenosha would not be where they are without the continued support – spiritual, financial, volunteer – of our priests and deacons, school parents, parishioners, and the greater community. ASCS and SJCA would not have their level of excellence without the unwavering passion and dedication of our administrators, teachers, and staff. The committee members of the KCSA recognize this and would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to all of you.

We ask for your continued prayers, support, and patience as we continue our work. Please send any questions to kenoshacatholicschoolsalliance@gmail.com.

We are Better Together...United in Christ

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