

St Mary's School of Kickapoo

Status Report

December 4, 2022

Please Note: To limit costs, this is the last status report we will mail out, as it is available in other formats. If you still want to receive these reports in the US mail, please contact Steve Borge (steveborge@telstar-online.net) or text or phone 309.712.9901.

BENCHMARKS

All these benchmarks need to be met if we are to open school in the fall, 2023.

1. It is imperative that we do not drop below our current enrollment of 63 students. If by April, 2023 we have less than 63 kids signed up of the '23-'24 school year, we will not open.
2. All families who choose to enroll their children for the '23-'24 school year must be fully up-to-date in all tuition, registration, technology payments.
3. Beginning in August, 2023 there will be only two payment rate options: Either full-tuition or parishioner tuition. The only discounts will be for multi-student families or students of full time SMS employees. Those qualifying for the parishioner tuition rate must attend weekly mass financially support the church beginning NOW.
4. All previous "deals" or tuition payment arrangements made with the school or previous pastors will be null and void beginning August, 2023.

INFORMATION AND UPDATES

1. To clarify a point of confusion from the Nov 10 meeting, our fund-raising goal for the school for 2022-23 school year is \$100,000 (by Feb 1, 2023). There is no other goal. Donations to the parish are always welcome, but they will not count towards the \$100,000 goal for the school.
2. To address a question that has come up: Please be aware that CAT Matching benefits apply only to monetary donations that are directed to St Mary's School. Donations made to St Mary's Church do not qualify for matching.
3. Donations that are matched by CAT Matching will not be paid out by them until March '23. Those matching funds, despite not actually paid until March, will count toward our fundraising goal of \$100,000.
4. Another question from Nov 10: Over-capacity at other parish schools that could be re-routed to us. We have contacted St. Jude and St. Phil schools to inform them of our availability to accept students. They will keep us informed if they should need help.
5. Question from Nov 10: statistics of the Pre-K to K attrition rate over the recent years – how many kids start Pre-K at SMS that do return for K
Spring 2016 to Fall 2016 Pre-K Total 20: 12 Retained 8 Left (7 to Public K, 1 to St Jude K)
Spring 2017 to Fall 2017 Pre-K Total 11: 6 Retained 5 Left (5 to Public K)
Spring 2018 to Fall 2018 Pre-K Total 9: 7 Retained 2 Left (2 to Public K)
Spring 2019 to Fall 2019 Pre-K Total 11: 3 Retained 8 Left (8 to Public K)
Spring 2020 to Fall 2020 Pre-K Total 9: 4 Retained 5 Left (5 to Public K)
Spring 2021 to Fall 2021 Pre-K Total 10: 5 Retained 5 Left (5 to Public K)
Spring 2022 to Fall 2022 Pre-K Total 10: 4 Retained 6 Left (6 to Public K)
6. To clarify a question from the Nov 10 meeting: In the Income section of the SMS Budget Worksheet, the "Athletics" title is incorrect. The correct title of the line should be "School Other Income/Reimbursement From Boosters". The large amount, compared to other years, is primarily due to the COVID Relief funds

received during the second half of that year. There was no amount received from the Boosters during this period.

7. Some additional information on the CAT Matching Program: There is a \$10,000 annual max per person. Donations to the school need to be made before 12/31/2022. To be eligible for the match, participants must submit matching gift requests online through the Caterpillar Cares portal before 1/31/2023. LIMITED TIME: 2:1 Caterpillar match. There is a \$1,000 max here: you donate \$500 CAT will double to \$1,000. Donations to the school must be made from November 28 through December 12. CAT will support this program until the match reaches \$2 million. At that point the program and double-up benefit will stop.
8. Other information and how-to details for both the CAT Matching Fund process and the Empower Illinois process are available on tables at the rear of the church.
9. Update on the SMS Endowment Fund: The Finance Comm has made contact with the relevant banks, who are in the process of compiling historical information to use as a base. This will help us understand fully the current status of the Fund and what options may be available. We will continue to follow up and report further in future status reports.
10. To clarify another question from Nov. 10: a parishioner may make a Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from their IRA, non-taxable to them, and direct it to SMS. For anyone who may want to consider that, please contact your financial advisor to ensure you go through the proper compliance steps on your particular investment.

NEXT STEPS

Finalize parishioner and non-parishioner tuition rates for '23- '24

The following questions from the Nov 10 meeting are still being investigated:

Do we have a plan or can we determine how to best educate the parents of Pre-K kids on financial help and incentives and how to apply for and understand the details that would enable their child to stay on for K?

Is it possible SMS could provide all-day child care on non-school days?

Because the larger Kickapoo and surrounding area may be willing to contribute, how do we publicize the SMS issues effectively to that wider community?

How can we better advertise for our school around the Sommer Park area? That area has their own HOA newsletter and the corner of 150 and Koerner/Trigger Road would be a good spot for a sign.

SUMMARY

It is important that ALL parish members are aware of two important things:

- 1.. Our-fund raising goal of \$100,000 for the school is just to help the school through the 2022-23 school year by reducing the amount of support required from the parish. Without a substantial increase in school enrollment and the related tuition income, additional funds of similar amounts (or more) will be required to sustain the school in each future year.
2. There is a need to permanently reduce the amount of funding provided to the school by the parish, aligning the funding level to that which is 1) recommended by the diocese and 2) consistent with the funding level of other diocesan parishes that support schools. In our case, because of the large amount of support the school has required in recent years, many near-critical repairs to the church structure and the rectory have gone undone. While this is sustainable for a while, it cannot continue without putting the long-term viability of the PARISH at significant risk. It is imperative that the physical and financial needs of the parish (not only the school) are being met.