

State of the School Address
January 2017

Welcome to the annual State of the School meeting. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules, and in such horrible weather to come this evening. This meeting is designed to inform the school community of the progress the school is making, to discuss future plans that will make our school even stronger, and to give parents an opportunity to get to know one another better as well as give welcomed feedback to the school.

Last year at this time we shared the results of our parent survey. We will share the results for this year's survey in a meeting we will hold in the spring. To date, we have around 154 completed surveys. We encourage those of you who have not participated to take a few minutes this week. When reviewing the results from last year's survey, we found that our parents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the education that their children receive at Saint Columbkille Partnership School. Last year, parents told us that the state of the school was strong. I share the opinion of our parents. We also learned that there were areas that we needed to work on to become even stronger.

We have a school where children work hard and learn to respect one another. Our parents are getting to know each other better and more and more appropriately engage with the school as partners for the education of their children. Our faculty are highly qualified and extremely dedicated. Our Board of Trustees and benefactors continue to work hard to make our school financially sustainable. And, most importantly, our children know that it is their responsibility to model Gospel values and change the world for the better.

The parent survey told us that we could do a better job with the communications, particularly regarding the co-curricular program. To respond to this, we worked hard this past summer. We conducted surveys of parents, teachers and students to determine areas of interest. We recruited teachers to offer clubs that would match the interests of students and parents. We organized a yearlong schedule that helps families coordinate the school's offerings with family activities. We created a website for posting information about each of the clubs. I have heard from parents that this year, our efforts to better communicate in this area were well received.

In last year's survey, there was an indication that our recreational facilities and programming could be improved and enhanced. Clearly, the outdoor recreation center has added much to our school. We place high value on "whole-child" education. The field is used all day long and everyday after school. This morning before school, I noticed twenty of our children playing soccer during the monsoon! For older children, we have added instructional soccer, archery, tennis, and Go-Girl-Go (a fitness club). Our track program has doubled in size with our children competing in meets. The girls basketball program in Loyola Academy has also

expanded. We added a fit kids club, jewelry-making club, select choir, a second art club, book club, engineering clubs for boys and girls and a millionaires club. Hmm.... Maybe they can raise the 2 million dollars needed to renovate our gym. We think it impressive that we have expanded our club and sports offerings that now number 37.

Your responses and comments on last year's survey told us that we had work to do to maximize our parental engagement. We have an extremely dedicated and hard working core of parent volunteers. This group of parents were called upon much too often to organize and carry out activities sponsored by the Home and School Association. While these parents willingly gave of their time, it was clear that an infusion of more parents into our parent volunteerism program was needed. During the spring and summer, we worked with the Home and School Association leadership to restructure our programs for parental engagement. We designed a program that will allow parents to volunteer in areas where they felt most comfortable, afford more leadership opportunities, and generally engage more parents to support the school through volunteerism.

There have been wonderful events taking place to help bring the community together. Hats off to our parent volunteers and in particular, our Community Building Committee. During the summer we served 350 ice cream cones at the ice cream social. The "Trunk or Treat" event was a lot of fun (I have video to prove it). The Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas at Saint Columbkille events were tremendously successful. The first annual Christmas tree lighting was well attended and the Christmas/Nativity shows sent us off for Christmas with spirits high and prayerful.

The Community Building Committee continues to work hard to sponsor activities that will bring us closer together. This year, more parents have stepped up to the plate. However, this is only the beginning. Our hope is that more and more parents will engage with us and volunteer. The torch must pass to others willing to step up. There are events on the calendar such as Field day, Book Fair, Easter dinner that could use soldiers and new generals who can learn how to organize and run them.

We are working on a program to engage our current parents as mentors for families who are new to our school. Erika Rego is looking for parents who can help out. Our new parents told us that it took some time before they felt fully integrated into our community. Some are still trying to figure it out. We have to do a better job reaching and engaging our new families.

This year, we formed a Parent Advisory Committee in order to formalize the connection between the administration and parents. I selected parents who are representative of our families to serve as a sounding board for us. This group will help us better understand the needs of our families and help us actualize our strategic plans. We have had discussions about the collection that took place to support teacher bonuses at Christmas; the remaking of the Christmas at Saint Col's;

and the balance of play and work at school. We will begin to discuss the role of assessment and ways to make our school financially sustainable.

Over the past several years, many parents suggested that we add Spanish to our curriculum. This year, we made a financial commitment to do so. We added Spanish to our curriculum from pre-K through grade 8. This change has been well received. Children are learning how to speak a second language. When I am asked how this program has been going, I enthusiastically say "Muy Bien!"

Lastly, we clearly understand that families must make sacrifices to send their children to our school. Many of our families struggle to make ends meet. We have worked hard to keep tuition affordable and to raise the needed funds to help families that cannot afford to pay the tuition and to provide programming beyond the classroom. We are committed to doing this going forward. At the same time, we recognize that in order to retain our wonderful teachers we must justly compensate them. Thus, each year, tuition will continue to rise. We also must recognize that our school spends more on each child than most Catholic elementary schools do and that tuition revenue does not cover our expenses.

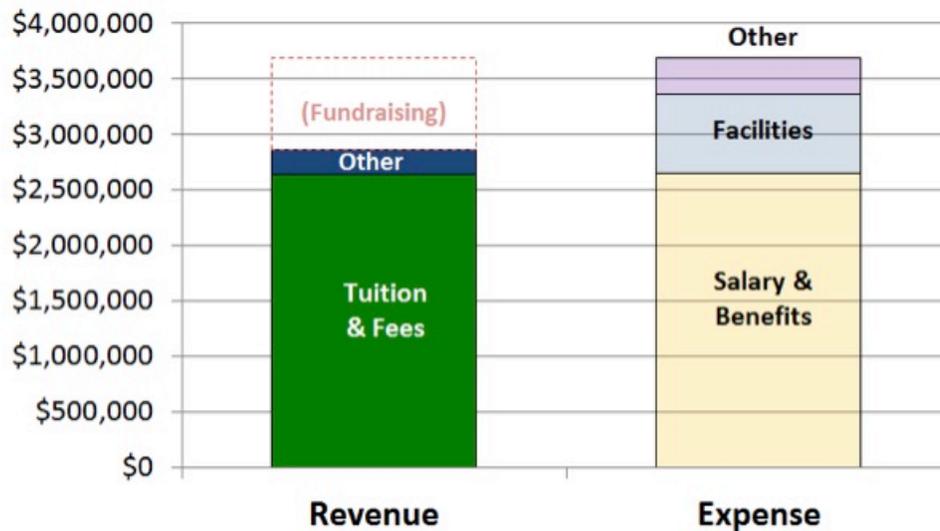
We take pride in offering comprehensive academic and co-curricular programs. You told us that you highly valued small class size. We believe that education is enhanced with fewer children in the classroom. In this way we get to know and love our children. You place high value on our programs for the arts and sciences. Our steadfast belief in the importance of educating the whole child is actualized through our music, art, Spanish, science, and physical education programs. Having teachers who are trained in these areas is necessary to provide the best instruction possible. Having a student support coordinator who spends her time helping children to become socially and emotionally adjusted is also critically important. With the proliferation of technology, we see it as necessary to have a specialist in that area. We have good, committed families, enthusiastic students and the necessary resources in place to help them learn and grow in knowledge and faith.

Tonight, we will begin to explain the school's financial obligations. During the coming months we will develop a financial plan that will help our school continue to offer robust academic and co-curricular programs well into the future. In Conclusion, we are proud of our school and want to do whatever is necessary to become an even better school. We realize that there are financial constraints that challenge us and that many of our families have trouble making ends meet. For us to accomplish our vision we will need your help. I am certain that as partners, the Home and the School will work together for the good of the children and for so many children yet to come. Thank you, again for coming tonight and for helping us to be the excellent school that we are.

St. CPS 2017-2018 Tuition

	Actual 2015-2016	Actual 2016-2017	Planned 2017-2018	Increase Amount
Tuition And Fees				
Pre-K (5 days / week)	\$7,800	\$8,300	\$8,800	\$500
Pre-K (3 days / week)	\$6,800	\$7,300	\$7,700	\$400
K1	\$7,800	\$8,300	\$8,800	\$500
K2 - 8 (first child)	\$5,800	\$6,200	\$6,600	\$400
K2 - 8 (additional)	\$5,400	\$5,800	\$6,200	\$400

St. CPS 2016-2017 Operating Budget



- Gap between income and expenses: **\$825,000**
- Dependent on annual fundraising