

~ To the Parents of Current and Prospective Students at Archbishop O'Hara and St. Mary High Schools ~

For some time, the diocese, school leaders and families committed to Catholic secondary education have wrestled with the possibilities for educating our students. We have studied this question from many different angles and tested many different scenarios. The previous studies were conducted in response to specific needs and desires of local communities -- from St. Mary High School and from parishioners in Lee's Summit. These local initiatives were invaluable in showing need but funding proved problematic. The final study of the Eastern Jackson County Diocesan Secondary School market broadened the geographic area and the potential constituency. Bishop Finn has received this final recommendation to build a new high school in the county. For this school to become a reality, there are additional hurdles to cross:

- A feasibility study must be conducted to confirm that our community has the capacity to raise the necessary funds of \$15 million to build a new high school.
- Land must be purchased along the I-470/MO 291 corridor at a location that will be accessible to all our Jackson County Catholic families and neighbors interested in a distinctly Catholic and academically excellent education.
- A working group of clergy, educators, board members and community representatives from Jackson County must develop and implement a program to ensure the continued excellence of Archbishop O'Hara and St. Mary High Schools until a new state of the art high school is ready to serve our community.
- Planning for the curricula, facility, fiscal stability and all ancillary services, needs and challenges of a new high school must be in place and executed in a timely fashion. A desired date to open a new school is the fall of 2015.

The final pieces are in all of our hands. Funding of a new high school and carrying forward the academic excellence of our current schools is a community enterprise. We are excited about building a bright future for our students and hope that you will join with us in creating that future.

Best Regards.

Steve Hilliard – Director of Strategic Planning
Diocese of Kansas City – St. Joseph

REMEMBER!

If you have two children in diocesan schools and at least one is in a diocesan high school, be sure and pick up an application for the "Honoring Family Scholarship" from your high school. This program is for your family regardless of financial need. For more information go to MyCatholicSchools.org.