School Merger Information Session January 2020

Holy Name & St. Peter-Marlan Junior-Senior High Schools

Stronger Together

Diocese of Worcester Catholic Schools Office
Frequently Asked Questions
What prompted the decision to combine the schools and what are you hoping to achieve?
Demographic Realities

• Declining birth rates since the Great Recession have resulted in two million fewer school age children nationwide, a demographic reality affecting private schools across the U.S.

• Massachusetts population declines due to relocation were among the highest in the nation in 2019.

• Worcester County reflects statewide and national demographic trends.
Declining enrollment at both schools forced the question of how to sustain a robust Catholic high school experience for the greatest number of students.

To deliver a stronger academic program and a richer student experience, it makes sense to bring the students and resources of both schools together.
Our Goal

Offer an affordable and academically excellent Catholic education to as many students as possible within a single junior-high/high-school community.
Where will the new school be located?
• Formal Facilities Review launched in December 2019.

• SAAM, the architectural firm retained by the Diocese, is assessing the condition, relative strengths and weaknesses of the two existing campuses.

• A comprehensive analysis of facilities needs, costs, and opportunities represented by both campuses is expected to finish before mid-February 2020.
Another advisory partner, Meitler & Associates, is analyzing demographic data including where our students reside and how they likely commute to existing schools.

Current transportation services will be continued.

Based on demand and feasibility, transportation services may expand to meet families’ needs.
• The sale of one campus and the financial commitment of the diocese will permit capital improvements to the physical plant of the campus selected.

• The Diocese will work with SAAM Architecture to develop a renovation plan and schedule.
When will decisions about school siting and improvements be made?

What are the milestones?
• Facilities assessments and cost analysis expected to conclude in February 2020.

• Siting decision will be made in early March 2020.

• First-wave renovations may take place in summer 2020.
How will the administrative team be appointed? When will it be put in place?
An experienced and qualified team of administrators will be appointed as soon as possible.

Michael Clark will serve as Associate Superintendent and Head of School.

We hope to appoint several administrators by the end of February: 1) Principal; 2) Associate Principal for Student Life; 3) Associate Principal for Ministry; and 4) Athletic Director.
The selection committee includes representation from the Catholic Schools Office and Catholic School Board.

Internal candidates have been invited to apply.

We hope to select qualified candidates from our internal pool.

If necessary, we will open an external search this spring.
How and when will the selection and appointment of faculty, coaches, and staff take place?
Once Administrative Leadership is appointed, they will undertake a thoughtful, transparent process of staffing.

The Head of School and Principal will assume primary responsibility for the appointment and oversight of faculty and school support staff.

Announcements regarding initial faculty appointments will be made in Spring 2020. Some hiring may continue through Summer 2020.
Will there be changes to the curriculum and academic program?
• The two schools have had distinct curricular standards and requirements for graduation.

• To assure that rising seniors in the Class of 2021 meet their graduation requirements, we will blend the program of studies for the 2020-2021 academic year.
• A process of curriculum review will be conducted by a committee that includes faculty representation.

• This review will be done in concert with the 10-year NEASC school re-accreditation self-study process that both schools were mandated to begin in 2020.
- We do not anticipate cutting any existing AP or accelerated course offerings.

- Based on enrollment, may be able to add course offerings.

- We are committed to maintaining class sizes at appropriate levels.

- It is a priority to see that students benefit from both individualized instruction and right-sized learning cohorts in the classroom.
Will there be changes or cuts to the athletic or extracurricular programs?
By bringing the two school communities together, we expect to enhance opportunities to participate in athletics and extracurricular clubs and activities.

We may be able to add Freshman and JV squads to some sports that have previously lacked them.
How will this merger impact tuition, financial aid, and the costs to families?
We are deeply committed to making a high-quality Catholic education affordable for students and families in our diocese.

Tuition for the 2020-21 Academic Year will be $9500 for Grades 9-12 and $8800 for Grades 7-8. Rates for international students will be announced at a later date.
• We plan to sustain a constant level of financial aid for students and families who qualify, apply, and demonstrate need.

• The Diocese will begin accepting financial aid applications on February 3 through FACTS Grant & Aid Assessments.

• At the time the new school site is announced, the Diocese will provide a deadline for financial aid applications and a date by which financial aid awards will be communicated.
What about the school name, mascot, uniform? Who will we become now?
• We will engage a cross-section of stakeholders, and seek significant student input, in the selection of:

  o School Name
  o Mascot
  o Colors
  o Uniforms
  o Other branding elements
• All policies, including the code of conduct and uniform policy, will be reviewed and revised before close of the current academic year.

• Decisions will be announced by June 2020.
How will we stay on track?

How will I be kept informed?

What are my opportunities for input in decisions?
A Steering Committee, with working subcommittees, is being impaneled to help guide different dimensions of this process.

Working committees to include: Human resources; Mission and Catholic Identity; Athletics/Co-Curricular/Student Activities; Academics/Curriculum; Marketing/Enrollment/Communications management; Finances; and Facilities

We have retained additional expertise and support services to assure frequency and transparency of communication.
- Regular updates will be delivered at two-week intervals in February and March.

- Additional e-news updates will be broadcast as milestones are achieved.

- A Web Page has been added to the CSO Website (https://schools.worcesterdiocese.org/) where the latest news and FAQ’s can be found.

- An email box (CSO@worcesterdiocese.org) has been established and will be monitored.
Stronger Together

St. Peter Marian
Holy Name
Junior-Senior
High Schools
Stronger Together

St. Peter Marian
Holy Name
Senior-Senior
High Schools