



**PITTSBURGH-EAST REGIONAL
CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, INC.**

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Pittsburgh, PA 15208

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412.259.3870

January 24, 2020

Dear parishioners, school families, faculty, and staff,

Over many years you have shown love and commitment to Saint Maria Goretti School; especially over the past few years where you have gone the extra mile to attempt to increase both enrollment and fundraising. Your desire to provide a quality Catholic education for your children is inspirational.

As president of the board of Pittsburgh-East Regional Catholic Elementary Schools, Inc., I can assure you that our foremost concern is to offer the best possible education for your children. The standard of the Diocese of Pittsburgh is to provide a school environment that supports academic, spiritual, social, and emotional formation at every grade level for the long term.

Many long conversations have taken place over the past months, beginning with meetings with local clergy, volunteers, parish and financial councils and parents. Unfortunately, with the significant decline in enrollment, decreased tuition revenue, reduced ability for the supporting parishes to provide more than the minimum subsidy required, and increasing indebtedness, the quality Catholic education that we all strive for is not possible.

Below is some information about Saint Maria Goretti School that is important to know.

K-8 Enrollment- Enrollment declined from 172 students in 2016-17 to 131 in the current school year. If we had been able to retain those 41 students, the school would have another \$178,000 in tuition income annually.

St. Maria Goretti Parish/School Debt History- A number of factors led the parish and school to report combined debt of more than \$1 million at the end of the 2017-2018 fiscal year. In the next fiscal year of 2018-2019, the sale of parish property resulted in the combined debt being reduced to slightly over \$822,000. Based on current projections absent added property sales, the debt balance is likely to increase least another \$300,000 by June 30, 2020.

St. Maria Goretti Parish and School Financial Summary- Parish offertory income declined 19% between 2017-18 and 2018-19. As of the first quarter in the 2019-20 fiscal year, it is declining at an annual rate of another 21%. For the last two fiscal years, the parish has reported a deficit of \$61,000 and \$85,000 before providing any school subsidy. Despite one of the largest diocesan

grants and substantial fundraising efforts, the school budget needed \$194,000 in parish subsidy to balance in 2018-19 and is projected to need \$252,000 this year. Based on current activity, the parish is unlikely to be able to provide any subsidy. In order to fund the school deficit of \$252,000 without parish subsidy, tuition would need increased more than \$1,900 per student. Even if the parish found a way to provide the minimum amount of subsidy required by diocesan policy (10% of parish income or \$41,000), it would still result in a deficit of more than \$200,000 requiring an increase of \$1,600 per student.

In view of these facts and with deep regret, the board voted to recommend that Saint Maria Goretti School should be closed at the end of this current 2019-20 school year. Bishop Zubik, after conferring with his representatives from the board, accepted the recommendation.

We realize how difficult these closures are for many of you. We understand you are very concerned about where you will be able to send your children to continue their education. In February, to assist with this important process, local principals and their staff from each of our remaining PERCES schools will come to Saint Maria Goretti to help find the right fit for each of our families. Additionally, please consider looking at our regional website at perces.org to find schools that are eager and willing to accept new students into their community. Places are available for all our students. For any assistance with this, please contact your principal or Joseph Rosi, our Regional Administrator, at rosij@perces.org.

I want to recognize in a special way the hard work and dedication of the principal, Sr. Mary John, all of the faculty, staff, school families, and parishioners who support Saint Maria Goretti School, together with your clergy. Thank you again for your love for Catholic Education, which I know stems from your deep faith and your desire for your children to follow Jesus. We want to continue to be partners with you in support of our Catholic schools and our children in the East region. You will be in my prayers as you seek a new school home for your children.

With every best wish and prayers, I am,

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Very Rev. Kris D. Stubna". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Very Reverend Kris D. Stubna, S.T.D.
President of the Board, Pittsburgh-East Regional Catholic Elementary Schools