

TCCES State of the Schools Address
January 2010
Summary

On January 11, 12 and 14, 2010, Mr. Michael Sullivan, TCCES President, presented the TCCES State of the Schools address. The following is a summary of the information he shared with TCCES parents, staff and parishioners.

Registration 2010-2011

- Registration packets for current TCCES families were distributed at the presentations. Any packets that were not picked up were mailed to parents.
- Registration dates are different than what is listed on the TCCES calendar. Open or priority registration began at the State of the Schools presentations and will end on February 5. Another difference this year is that registration will be handled by Jennifer Miller, TCCES Director of Admissions, which will make the process more efficient. You may still turn the registrations in at any of the schools.
- Priority registration will be given to all families whose forms are received by February 5, 2010. Priority registration means that the fee will only be \$50 per student or a maximum of \$150 per family; families will be guaranteed the elementary school of their choice; and priority will be given to tuition assistance and scholarship applications received by that date.
- Tuition will increase less than 3% at all grade levels next year. The finance committee strove to keep the tuition increase to a minimum. Our tuition rates continue to be among the most affordable in the area.
- Tuition rates for the 2010-2011 school year will be \$2340 for kindergarten to 5th grade, \$3050 for 6th to 8th grade and \$4935 for 9th to 12th grade.
- The actual cost of educating our students is much higher than what is covered by tuition. Please see the Cost Per Student & Revenue Source charts on page 4. The difference in the actual cost from elementary through high school is due to the need for specialized instructors at the high school level (e.g. math, science and language arts) rather than having one teacher who teaches all the subjects to a group of students (as in elementary school).
- Transition Grants and Multi Child Discounts: Due to the success of the program, these grants will be offered again this year. The grants are available to all families who are moving from preschool to kindergarten (\$100 grant), 5th to 6th grade (\$150 grant) and 8th to 9th grade (\$200 grant). The Multi Child Discount will begin with the second child from each family. Families will need to fill out the grant application to obtain these benefits. Everyone that applies for the grants will receive them, and no financial information is required with these grant applications.
- This school year (2009-10), TCCES offered \$420,000 in tuition assistance and scholarships. Next year, it is anticipated that we will have fewer funds available for tuition assistance and scholarships. It is very important that families turn in their tuition assistance and scholarship applications by February 5.
- Mike Sullivan personally handles all applications for tuition assistance and scholarships and ensures the confidentiality of all applications. He is also available to meet privately with families.
- Also, parents need to remember that each year TCCES offers five tuition credit fundraisers to help families reduce their tuition bills. They are Scrip, Market Day,

Sally Foster, Entertainment Book sales and the plant sale. Scrip, in particular, is a great way to earn significant tuition credit with purchases like groceries or gas.

TCCES Progress and the Strategic Plan

TCCES began using strategic planning four years ago, and two-and-a-half years ago the current plan was written. In addition, last year the board approved a marketing plan. TCCES will complete a major rewrite of our strategic plan before the corporate board meeting in March 2010. This updated plan will be presented to Bishop Ricken at the meeting.

The strategic plan has been particularly successful in four areas:

- **Building Enrollment:** Our plan to approach enrollment growth from the bottom up has worked very well for our system. Our goal was to build preschool enrollment and then retain the students as they move to kindergarten and higher grades. In five years, we have grown enrollment from 895 to 955. Currently, the combined number of students in each grade at our three elementary schools averages 70. This is our target number, and our goal is to have 70 students in every grade, kindergarten through 12. This year's kindergarten class actually has 80 students, and SMC has a registered freshman class in the low 80's. There is a lot of excitement over the growing enrollment!
- **Standardized Curriculum Preschool to Grade 12:** Our administrators and teachers have done a tremendous amount of work to make sure that our curriculum is aligned at each grade level. A great deal of curriculum work has been done at each school and every grade level. Curriculum mapping, which outlines the flow of curriculum from one grade to the next, has received a considerable amount of attention and is now beginning at the high school level. We are making a concerted effort to improve each year and to be consistent at all the schools.
- **Improved Communications:** The updated website was launched this fall and more communication comes via email and/or is web based. We are trying very hard to get more information to parents, alumni and supporters. TCCES has utilized parent surveys for the last two years and the information gathered is very useful to principals, administrators and teachers as they work to strengthen our schools and programs. The surveys are a very important way for TCCES to gather information. Please continue to fill out the surveys and to be honest.
- **Define and Strengthen Our Catholic Identity:** TCCES spent quite a bit of time writing a Catholic identity statement in the last year. This statement is attached on page 5. The Catholic identity statement strengthens our schools and our system because it is the most important part of our educational mission. However, it is only a statement on paper unless we live it. When you walk into a TCCES school, you should know that you are in a Catholic school--not just because of what you see, but by how students, teachers and administrators act and treat others.

TCCES Challenges

Over the last several years our most difficult struggles have been in financial areas. We have been borrowing against ourselves by using a line of credit. Bringing ourselves out of this situation and clearing the line of credit will drive many decisions in the updated strategic plan. We have a \$5.4 million budget and 80% of that goes to salary and benefits.

There are five areas that the updated strategic plan will need to address:

- Funding & finance
- Enrollment growth at SMC
- Balanced enrollment growth at the elementary level, particularly at St. Mary Elementary
- Technology integration
- Seton facility – Although the building is very structurally sound, it is an older building and we do need to determine a plan for the future.

Concerns about these five areas are recurring, and although they are different and will require varying strategies for success, they are all tied together. As a community, we need to address them together. The TCCES Board of Education and the pastors feel there is a 12 to 18 month timeframe to evaluate and act on these five areas.

Some of these items are already being considered and addressed. A committee is currently investigating a campaign to grow our endowments and strengthen our finances, and the advancement department has been working hard on enrollment and recruiting.

Technology integration has been a primary focus in the last six to eight months. The One-to-One Laptop Program at SMC is moving along very well. Over the summer of 2009, SMC's wireless infrastructure was installed. The teachers have been working with their laptops since the start of the school year and intensive training is scheduled for this spring and summer. The student portion of the program will be implemented in the 2010-2011 school year. Over Christmas break, Seton installed wireless technology. This installation will make their mobile laptop lab much more efficient and useable. TCCES will continue to emphasize technology in our classrooms and integrate it into our curriculum to prepare students for the digital world in which they will work and live.

This year, TCCES is pleased to announce the inception of three teacher and staff awards that will be given annually. They are the St. John Baptist de la Salle Outstanding Teacher Award, the St. Frances Xavier Award for Positive Influence and the St. Anne Award for TCCES Spirit. The description of these awards and nomination forms will be released during Catholic Schools Week. Parents, students, faculty, staff and alumni will be encouraged to nominate TCCES faculty and staff members who have blessed our community with outstanding service, talent and dedication to the ministry of Catholic education. The awards will be presented each year at the end-of-year staff gathering.

In conclusion, TCCES parents can assist our schools in growth and success by continuing to speak positively about the schools and TCCES. Please continue to tell others in the community about our schools and our teachers' dedication to our students.