Dear Friends and Families of Catholic Schools:

This has definitely been a year unlike any other year! In 2018, when we began our strategic plan to focus on the growth of Catholic education in the Diocese of Green Bay, we never expected a pandemic would be part of the equation. While many Catholic schools across the country have been forced to close due to the financial stress of the pandemic, our schools were able to remain open to provide in-person education throughout the 16 counties we serve.

There were many reasons why we were able to remain open while so many public schools were closed. First, we have maintained smaller class sizes which made it easier to implement social distancing and other safety protocols. Second, our strength is the communities we form. Whether school Masses or bonds in the classroom, many core elements of Catholic education are strengthened by in-person interaction and not a Zoom session.

Finally, our schools spent hundreds of hours planning how to support each student and meet the needs of families who wanted in-person teaching while also making sure to provide a quality education for those who wanted to protect vulnerable family members through virtual learning.

Even though the pandemic has taken center stage in much of our work, our schools have had great accomplishments this year that are worth noting. St. Ignatius Catholic School and Saint John Paul II Catholic School have added Chesterton model high schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

Notre Dame of De Pere School completed construction of a 90,000-square-foot new building. The school provides an integration of faith and state-of-the-art technology. The students, staff and community are enjoying the beautiful new school.

Holy Spirit Catholic School, St. Edward Catholic School, Most Precious Blood Catholic School, St. John-Sacred Heart Catholic School and St. John Bosco Catholic School joined the Wisconsin School Choice Program this year. The schools are able, for the first two years, to provide a voucher for tuition to any student in grades PK4 through eighth grade who meets the State of Wisconsin eligibility requirements.

As we continue to pray that the pandemic will end, we are excited to be able to celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2021. On Wednesday, Feb. 3, we will be having an All-School Mass at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. In order to maintain social distancing, every school will have representatives in attendance and the mass will also be livestreamed to our schools so that, virtually, we can all celebrate together.

Please take time this week to find out what is happening at your local Catholic school as well as how you can support the schools in the Diocese of Green Bay during this time. Our schools have proven, now more than ever, that they are a vibrant and important part of every community. We pray for their continued success as we look forward to a better 2021.

Sincerely,

Todd Blahnik
 Superintendent of Catholic Schools

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New Notre Dame School Opens

The new Notre Dame of De Pere School building officially opened on Aug. 26, 2020, for the first day of the 2020-21 academic year. De Pere natives and Catholic supporters Jim and Miriam Mulva provided a parish gift of $27 million to cover the costs of building the 90,000-square-foot, three-story school. A Bible verse (Luke 1:37) etched into the 2020 cornerstone corresponds with the school’s new address of 137 S. Superior St. “For with God nothing shall be impossible.” The new Notre Dame of De Pere School houses students in preschool through eighth grade in the same building. Previously, Notre Dame Elementary School and Notre Dame Middle School were in separate buildings two blocks apart. St. Francis Xavier Parish built its first school 150 years ago, in 1870. St. Mary Parish constructed its first school in 1882. They combined to become Notre Dame of De Pere in 1971.
Learning and Growing Despite Covid-19 Challenges

The year 2020 was challenging for learning and teaching. However, as students, teachers and parents transitioned to learning at home beginning in March, they continued to excel in their learning. The continued dedication and work of students, teachers and parents is to be commended. Once students were back in the classroom in September for the new school year, teachers were able to assist students with meeting their learning needs through formative assessments in the classroom to determine the learning needs of each child.

The nationally normed assessment in elementary schools in the Diocese of Green Bay utilizes the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) to measure learning growth. Teachers are able to use the data to guide instruction for each child.

This spring, the state did not assess students in the public schools due to the complexities of assessing students while at home. Therefore, there is no comparative data from the spring. However, the data we can use to understand the learning growth of our students is with the national norm of the 50th percentile from NWEA.

In reading, language usage and math our third through eighth grade students have continued to perform above the national norm. While there is a slight decrease for cohorts from fall of 2019 to 2020, the indicators are strong that the in-person instruction will have a positive impact on student growth in learning.

Math remains strong at the middle school level, with students performing at or above the percentile from fall of 2019. Third through fifth grade students recorded a decline in this area. Teachers will continue to work to assist students in the area of math. Practicing math is important. Math practice includes activities in which children see the relationships between numbers and number concepts. Students can practice at their level through Khan Academy (khanacademy.com/math/mappers).

What is a Chesterton High School?

Named for the great English writer and Catholic convert G.K. Chesterton and inspired by St. Pope John Paul II, Chesterton schools take as their motto Cultura Vitae, meaning “the culture of life.” The schools make it their mission to prepare students to triumph over the materialism and despair that pervade our culture and to accept our Lord’s offer to have life and have it abundantly.

The classical curriculum combines a broad, liberal arts education with a strong emphasis on the development of Christian virtues and an appreciation of beauty. Through their Three Pillars Model, they form students in intellect, character and spirituality.

The Chesterton Schools Network (chestertonschoolsnetwork.org) was founded in 2007 by Dale Ahlquist, president and co-founder of the American Chesterton Society, and Tom Bengtson. Their mission was to offer a classical, integrated high school education that was faithful to the Catholic Church and be affordable for families. The first Chesterton Academy opened in the fall of 2008. Currently, there are 30 Chesterton Academy schools operating across the United States, Canada and Italy, with several additional schools scheduled to open in 2021.

Currently, we have two Chesterton Academy high schools in the Diocese of Green Bay. St. Ignatius Catholic School in Kaukauna and Saint John Paul II Catholic School in Green Bay. Please contact the schools to schedule a tour to learn more about the education they can provide your daughter or son.

Students at Chesterton Academy enjoy a cohesive, content-rich education. History, literature, philosophy and theology are braided together. The sciences and the humanities are also intimately connected, so that the logic of math is seen in philosophy, and God’s handiwork is seen in the sciences. Faith and reason meet in every class. Equal emphasis is given to the arts, so that every student learns to draw and paint, sing in the choir, play in the band, act on the stage, give speeches and engage in debate.

Each year builds on the previous, so that by the end of senior year, students develop into articulate, clear-thinking, well-rounded and, very importantly, joyful individuals. To further develop their spirituality, students enjoy retreats, adoration, formation classes and ongoing opportunities for service.

Studies have shown that a classical education is key for success at college. Classically educated students fare very well on standardized tests and college admissions. Yet the mission does not end with merely getting students into college. The schools are preparing them for life, which includes finding their vocation. A Catholic classical education helps students discern and follow God’s calling for their lives.

Ready-Set-Choice!

Starting Monday, February 1, the Wisconsin Parental Choice Portal will be open for the 2021-22 school year, and families may begin the registration process. All families must be residents of Wisconsin and meet current qualifying income levels. If your school participated in the Choice Program for the 2020-21 school year, students who received a Choice Voucher will need to reapply to continue in the program. Current families of existing Choice schools who did not receive a voucher but have a child going into grades PK-4, first and ninth are eligible to apply. New families are eligible to apply at all grade levels.

Applications for the Choice program are at sms.dpi.wi.gov/ChoiceParent. Please contact your school with any specific questions.
## CENTRAL REGION

### System/School
- Holy Spirit Catholic School
  - School/System Address: 140 S. Church Ave., Green Bay WI 54340
  - President/Principal: Kelly Wolf
  - Email: kellywolf@xaviercatholicschools.org
  - City: Green Bay
  - Grades: PK-5
- St. Edward Catholic School
  - School/System Address: 201 State St., Neenah WI 54956
  - President: Robert Bires
  - Email: rbires@xaviercatholicschools.org
  - City: Neenah
  - Grades: 6-8

### System/School
- St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School System
  - School/System Address: 1050 Zephyr Dr., Neenah WI 54956
  - President: Matthew Korol
  - Email: mmkorol@xaviercatholicschools.org
  - City: Neenah
  - Grades: 9-12

### NORTHERN REGION

### School/System
- All Saints Catholic School, Inc.
  - School/System Address: 1100 N. Walnut St., Appleton WI 54911
  - President: Dr. Tom Kiley
  - Email: tkiley@notredameacademy.com
  - City: Appleton
  - Grades: PK-12
- Holy Family Catholic School
  - School/System Address: 1401 Mill St., Green Bay WI 54302
  - President: Patrick Browne
  - Email: pbrowne@notredameacademy.com
  - City: Green Bay
  - Grades: PK-12

### SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

### School/System
- St. Francis Xavier Catholic School System
  - School/System Address: 100 S. Huron St., Greenville WI 54942
  - President: Tony Wesp
  - Email: twesp@gracesystem.org
  - City: Greenville
  - Grades: PK-12

### GREEN BAY

### School/System
- Our Lady of the Lakes Academy
  - School/System Address: 201 State St., Green Bay WI 54301
  - President: Patrick Browne
  - Email: pbrowne@notredameacademy.com
  - City: Green Bay
  - Grades: PK-12

### System/School
- Notre Dame Academy
  - School/System Address: 610 Maryhill Dr., Green Bay WI 54303
  - President: Walter Kiley
  - Email: wkiley@notredameacademy.com
  - City: Green Bay
  - Grades: PK-12

### GRACE System
- Notre Dame Elementary
  - School/System Address: 100 S. Huron St., Greenville WI 54942
  - President: Tony Wesp
  - Email: twesp@gracesystem.org
  - City: Greenville
  - Grades: PK-12

- St. Marys Elementary School
  - School/System Address: 2020 Hillside Ln., Green Bay WI 54303
  - President: Andy Wolfsen
  - Email: awolfsen@gracesystem.org
  - City: Green Bay
  - Grades: PK-12