

MAKING THE GRADE

NEWS FROM THE OMAHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONSORTIUM

APRIL 2017

STUDENTS RALLY IN SUPPORT OF SCHOOL CHOICE BILL

Eighth-grade students from Holy Cross, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Thomas More, Sts. Peter and Paul and St. Bernadette traveled to the state Capitol in Lincoln on Jan. 26 to rally in support of school choice. They joined students from CUES schools — All Saints, Holy Name and Sacred Heart — along with students, parents, teachers and other supporters of school choice. Wearing bright yellow scarves, they waved signs demonstrating their enthusiastic support for school choice.

The annual event was part of National School Choice Week and is sponsored by groups supporting school choice, including the Archdiocese of Omaha Catholic Schools Office and the Nebraska Catholic Conference. Speakers included Patrick Slattery, superintendent of Catholic schools and Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts.

Following the rally, Slattery testified before the Legislature's Revenue Committee in support of LB 295 (Opportunity Scholarships Act).

Slattery said that this bill is a form of school choice that empowers Nebraska parents to find the right educational fit for their child.



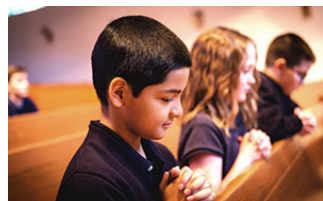
"As the program is funded by private scholarships, not seeking one penny of the public school funding model, it is a creative form of school choice that allows private schools to become better partners with public schools in educating all Nebraska children," he said.



"Forty-five states have adopted some form of school choice legislation, and such programs are

expanding rapidly across the country due to taxpayer and parent satisfaction. It is time for Nebraska to join the rest of the country and empower more parents to choose the form of education that is best for their child."

Tax credit scholarships (LB295) provide additional scholarship opportunities for low-to middle-income students who want to go to private schools by offering an incentive for donors to make charitable gifts to scholarship granting organizations. Currently the bill is still in committee.



CONSORTIUM SCHOOLS LAUNCH ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM

Last fall, our schools launched our first-ever Annual Fund – Together in Christ: Five Schools, One Mission. The Together in Christ Annual Fund is a collaborative effort to strengthen our Catholic identity, sustain our schools financially, continue our tradition of academic excellence and maintain affordable tuition.

Our goal is to raise \$200,000 by June 30 to fulfill our mission and meet the needs of our growing schools. We know this is a challenging goal, but with your help, we can reach it!

Earlier in April, all school families received an invitation to participate in the *Together in Christ* Annual Fund. Please review this information and prayerfully consider a gift to the Annual Fund. Thanks to a private supporter, all donations received by May 15, 2017 will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$25,000!

Here's How You Can Help:

- **Donate.** Complete the gift envelope that was sent home in early April, or visit www.omahacsc.org to make a secure online gift.
- **Invite others to invest in our mission.** Contact family, friends and neighbors. Tell them about our mission and encourage them to support the Consortium schools with a tax-deductible gift by May 15, 2017.
- **Volunteer.** The Development Office is seeking volunteers to make calls, send letters, thank donors and help coordinate events. Call 402.590.2815 for more information.

COOL NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

One Book One School Gets Holy Cross Families Reading

Holy Cross school families recently completed the One Book One School program that is focused on increasing literacy.

Thanks to funds raised by the school's Home and School Association, copies of the book "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio were given to each school family. Parents and students were asked to spend time each week at home reading assigned chapters of the book. To keep students interested and on task, each afternoon a trivia question from the book was posed to students over the school's intercom. The next morning, one correct answer was drawn out and the winning student received a small prize.

The *One Book One School* event culminated in a school-wide celebration on the evening of March 20 at the school. Families participated in a variety of fun games and activities including putt-putt golf in the school library, trivia games and tic-tac-toe.

"Wonder's" themes and characters were woven into the activities.

The book's theme, Choose Kind, was also a focus of the event. Families were asked to put together blessing bags for homeless residents at the Stephen Center. The bags included a pair of new socks, toiletries and snacks and families were asked to include a personal, short note of kindness such as "God bless you" in their completed bag. In addition, posters with the words "I Will Choose Kind" were hung on the school wall and parents and students were asked to sign the kindness pledge on the poster.

Kari Mansour, Holy Cross media specialist, said that she has been very excited about the *One Book One School* program at Holy Cross. "It's one of the best books. The students enjoyed the book and the adults have loved it too."

Holy Cross Reporters Share Good News on Social Media

Seventh-grade students from Holy Cross School are learning about the positive aspects of social media and how to use it responsibly as well as honing their reporting skills and celebrating their school by gathering news stories that are posted on the Omaha Catholic School Consortium Facebook page.

Working with Kari Mansour, media specialist at Holy Cross, students are assigned to one to two teachers in the school and must contact them to find out the latest news in their classrooms. Students are responsible for gathering information, taking a photo of the event or activity and writing a caption about the photo. Mansour is then responsible for posting the stories on the Consortium Facebook page.

In December, Mansour and her students posted a photo and caption that showed Holy Cross fourth graders helping their pre-kindergarten buddies make gingerbread houses and read Christmas books. "This activity is a real-life example of how to use social media in a good way," said Mansour.



Sts. Peter and Paul Principal to Leave at End of School Year

Sts. Peter and Paul Principal Cory Sepich will be leaving his position at the end of the year to become principal at St. Pius/St. Leo in Omaha.

We are grateful for his leadership and dedication in making the Consortium school model a great success and he will be missed.

Originally from Oregon, Sepich previously taught reading, language arts and social studies in Oregon. He and his wife, Katie, moved to Omaha so his wife could attend medical school at Creighton University. The couple has one child.

After moving to Omaha, Sepich taught fourth and sixth grades at St. Patrick's Catholic School in Elkhorn. He holds two master's degrees – one in teaching from the University of Portland and one in education from Creighton University. He is currently completing his Interdisciplinary Doctorate of Education from Creighton University.

"I could not have found myself in a better position as a Catholic school leader," Sepich said of his time at Sts. Peter and Paul. "Sts. Peter and Paul is a very special school and I am blessed with the opportunity to help make it grow and prosper to make the lives of our community stakeholders better."

Getting to Know Teri Krohn



Teri Krohn is the alumni relations and special events coordinator for the Omaha Catholic School Consortium. An Omaha native, Teri attended Christ the King School and Marian High School.

She attended Loyola University in Chicago.

Before coming to the Consortium, Teri was actively involved in many community service activities including Adoption Links Worldwide, Lutheran Family Services — Children's Services and Marian High. She founded Womenade of Greater Omaha, a grass-roots philanthropic group to assist women and children in the greater Omaha area with urgently needed goods and services. The group has raised and donated over \$40,000 since 2002.

Teri and her husband Phil have three sons, two in high school and one in college. They are members of St. Vincent de Paul parish. She enjoys spending time with friends and family, playing tennis and volunteering.

Save the Date - Omaha Gives!

The Omaha Catholic School Consortium will participate in Omaha Gives! on May 24 and we need your help!

Omaha Gives! is a 24 - hour giving event led by the Omaha Community Foundation designed to raise money for local nonprofits through online fundraising. Anyone can make a donation to the Omaha Catholic School Consortium during Omaha Gives! Donors do not need to have an Omaha Community Foundation account or live in the Omaha area to donate. The minimum donation is \$10 and there is no maximum.

Participating in Omaha Gives! is a great way to make your annual fund gift to our schools.

To donate during Omaha Gives! visit omahagives24.org and search for Omaha Catholic School Consortium. Click on our logo and follow the instructions to make your secure online donation. Thank you for your ongoing support of our member schools!

Like Us on Facebook!



Be sure to check out the Omaha Catholic School Consortium page on Facebook for updates, events and information from our member schools!

Alumni, We want to hear from you!

Attention alumni of Assumption, Holy Cross, Holy Ghost, Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Agnes, St. Bernadette, St. Bridget, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Mary, St. Peter, St. Stanislaus, St. Thomas More, and Sts. Peter and Paul – we want to hear from you! Let us know where you are today and we'll keep you in the loop about what's happening at the Consortium schools. To register, go to omahacsc.org/stay-connected/alumni/.

Support Our Schools

It is through generous support from individuals, alumni, and area businesses that we are able to bring quality Catholic education to more than 1,700 students. To discover how you can help strengthen our schools by giving the gift of your time, talent or treasures, please contact Nicole Evans, director of Development at nlevans@archomaha.org or 402.590.2815.

This is a publication of the Omaha Catholic School Consortium

To submit a story idea contact: Nicole Evans, director of Development at nlevans@archomaha.org

Visit our website at: Omahacsc.org

Mission

The Omaha Catholic School Consortium provides academic, administrative and financial support to its member schools to ensure students have access to an exceptional education in a nurturing and culturally unique environment, where they are encouraged to explore their Catholic faith and become Disciples of Christ. We are committed to Catholic education that will thrive in our community for generations to come.

Vision

We will be recognized as a sustainable model for Catholic education with schools that challenge students of all abilities to excel and become faith-filled leaders in service to God and others.

Omaha Catholic School Consortium

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[Email](#) Para hablar con alguien en Español, favor llamar 402-557-5570.