

## Saint Louis Catholic School

### Themes from Parent Input Session, May 19, 2010

#### How you chose SLCS: Research, Information Resources and Decision-Making Process

- Decision-making process involves spiritual guidance: from family, parish community, and prayer.
- Process begins when children are ages 3/4.
  - Parents whose children are in preschool have recently completed an emotional decision-making process, trusting another caregiver to nurture and teach their child.
  - The choice of K-8 program is equally emotional, as parents have high hopes and dreams for their child. Parents seek to find a safe, secure, trustworthy environment in which their child will thrive, in faith development and academic achievement.
  - Preschools are an excellent feeder directly into a K-8 program, or as a resource for referrals.
- Some parents consider only Catholic schools; some parents consider a broad array of educational options.
- Parents re-evaluate their decision annually, ensuring their child is well prepared academically for the next year/next stage, as well as ensuring tuition will fit within next year's budget.
- The Saint Louis community is "the glue"
- Priorities:
  - Authentic, traditional Catholic faith formation
  - Academic achievement
  - Cost
  - Safety and security
  - Class sizes
  - Connection with individual teacher(s)
  - Community
- Word-of-mouth referrals get SLCS into the "consideration set"
  - Parish and faith-based groups, communities
  - Family, neighbors, friends
  - Preschool parents and teachers
  - Moms in classes, leagues, activities for 2's, 3's, 4 (music, dance, athletics, etc.)
- School visit, tour are an exceptional opportunity to demonstrate Catholic faith in practice at SLCS . Web sites are consulted when parents are evaluating public and charter school options.
- Parents are highly influenced by:
  - How will this school pass the faith to their child?
  - Perceptions of how their will child fit in, learn, grow, in this environment?
  - Will the child be recognized, nurtured, individually? Will the child's individual needs be recognized, supported?
  - How their questions are answered, and by whom
  - 1:1 parent interaction with school leadership, teachers
  - How the family will be welcomed into the community
  - Observation of kids who attend the school: kids interacting in class; respectful, well-behaved children interacting with each other/teachers/parents
- Kids' perspectives and behaviors are highly influential: does the child enjoy the experience? Do the kids behave in a way consistent with faith?

### **Why you chose SLCS: Motivations**

- Primary importance: evidence of Catholic faith, in practice, in parish and in school
  - Partnership: church, school and home, in training a child
  - Faith-basis of education critically important to helping a child develop, grow
- Academic excellence follows in importance
- Strength of Saint Louis Parish leadership
  - Traditional Catholic faith
  - Support of pro-life
- Strength of Saint Louis Catholic School leadership, teachers
- Caring SL Community
- Tuition and tuition assistance

### **Alternatives considered:**

- Catholic Schools:
  - All Soul's
  - Ave Maria
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  - Most Precious Blood
  - Notre Dame
  - Our Lady of Lourdes
  - Saint Catherine's
  - Saint Mary's of Littleton
  - St. Thomas More
  - St. Vincent de Paul
- Home School
- Public Schools:
  - Neighborhood schools
  - Charter schools

### **Benefits, SLCS:**

- Catholic faith within Saint Louis Parish
- Evidence of Catholic faith in action at SLCS, in each child
  - Partners in parenting with teachers, to pass Catholic faith to each child
  - 1:1 dedicated attention for each child
  - SL children: reverent and growing in their faith, respectful behavior, with excellent achievement in school
  - School mass and Catholic traditions woven into curriculum
  - Teachers nurture each individual child, the whole child; dedicated to Catholic school, mission; clearly love each child
  - Communication between school administration, teachers, parents, children
- Community:
  - Each family, child welcomed warmly, connected, supported, like a family
  - Alignment of values: church, school, home
- Academic achievement