

# School Consolidation Update

## Governance and Buildings

### **What will the school be called?**

The consolidated school will be called “Marquette Academy.” The name “Marquette” respects the tradition of the school and our local history. Furthermore, it was the strong recommendation of our legal counsel that the name “Marquette” be retained since Marquette already exists as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and is periodically the recipient of wills and trusts. A significant name change could jeopardize wills that have already been written. The current Marquette High School is expanding to also include grades PreK – 8.

### **Who owns a Catholic school?**

During the Great Depression, Bishop Joseph Schlarman judged that it was in the interest of our parishes that they each be separately incorporated. A “parish grade school” is part of the parish corporation that sponsors it; diocesan schools are separately incorporated. Parishes in our Diocese have a five-member corporate governing structure that includes the Bishop (president), the Vicar General (vice-pres.), the Pastor (treasurer), and two lay trustees. In the case of Marquette, the Bishop has entrusted the role and responsibilities of the “owner” to the pastors of the fifteen parishes/missions in this immediate area. This was done many years ago.

### **What are the supporting parishes for Marquette Academy?**

They are the same as they were for Marquette High School. Namely: St. Teresa, Earlville; St. Joseph, Wedron; St. Mary, Utica; St. Mary, Naplate, St. Francis, Ottawa; St. Patrick, Ottawa; St. Columba, Ottawa; St. Joseph, Marseilles; St. Patrick, Seneca; St. Mary of the Field, Grand Ridge; St. Patrick, Ransom; Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Eagle Township; St. Anthony, Streator; St. Casimir, Streator; Immaculate Conception, Streator; St. Stephen, Streator. The pastors of these parishes constitute the “Pastors’ Board.” The Code of Regulation of the Pastors’ Board can be viewed at the school’s website: [www.marquettehs.com](http://www.marquettehs.com). Note that the Streator parishes will not be expected to financially support the grade-school component of the Academy since they have their own grade school which will continue to serve as a “feeder-school” for the Academy.

### **Who will govern Marquette Academy?**

Except for several matters that the Pastors have “reserved” to themselves, Marquette Academy will be governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will consist of 14-20 appointed lay members and 3 *ex officio* members. The lay members will be appointed by the Pastors’ Board at their annual meeting. The 3 *ex officio* members are the President and Vice-President of the Pastors’ Board and the Principal of the school. The By-Laws for the Board of Trustees can be viewed at the school’s website: [www.marquettehs.com](http://www.marquettehs.com).

### **How does one become a member of the Board of Trustees?**

Nomination forms will be available soon on the school’s website. You may nominate yourself or anyone else who agrees to be considered and fits the qualifications spelled out in the by-laws. The trustees will not “represent” a parish or other constituency. Rather, they will be selected because of their talents, expertise, and experience. The nominations will be reviewed between January and March by the Pastors’ Board. After the Pastors’ Board has selected the members, the President of the Pastors’ Board will issue letters of appointment. The new Board of Trustees will be constituted on July 1, 2010.

### **What will happen to the two grade schools?**

The question turns on the meaning of the word “school.” The term “school” can refer to either an institution or to a building. In terms of the “school as institution” question, neither St. Columba School nor St. Patrick School will exist as institutions after the consolidation. As far as the buildings are concerned, the building currently used by St. Columba School will be used by Marquette Academy as will the St. Patrick Early Education Building. The two parishes will retain ownership of their buildings and Marquette Academy will rent them from the parishes. Usage agreements will be drawn up by the parties involved. The old school building at St. Patrick will not be used by Marquette Academy except perhaps for cafeteria/gymnasium. Marquette Academy may seek to rent the gymnasium at St. Francis Parish.