



April 15, 2019

Dear St. Edward parents and community,

With summer break almost here, I wanted to let you know about an exciting, new initiative the Catholic Schools Office in the Diocese of Nashville will start next month in order to promote enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year at three of our schools: St. Edward School, St. John Vianney Catholic School and St. Pius X Classical Academy.

When I was appointed superintendent of the Nashville Diocesan schools in August, I began exploring best practices in enrollment in Catholic education across the country and landed on one idea that seemed to fit perfectly for our Nashville diocese. That is the idea of a “transfer grant program,” which provides students who are new to Catholic schools reduced tuition for one or two years as an incentive to give Catholic schools a try. This program was heavily touted as a way to increase enrollment and keep tuition affordable and accessible for students already in the Catholic schools.

The Diocese of Allentown, Pennsylvania, the Archdiocese of Omaha, Nebraska, and the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Georgia implemented their own successful transfer grant programs, and all three found that most new transfer families stayed at the individual schools after the grants expired. These successes show that when schools increase enrollment, tuition revenues rise and the total costs to operate schools are positively impacted. The benefit to ALL families in these schools is that increased enrollment helps keep tuition lower for everyone.

Taking cues from the dioceses mentioned above, we will implement our own ACE Welcome Grant starting May 1. ACE Welcome Grants will be offered to 10 new families at St. Edward School for the 2019-2020 school year with the express purpose of encouraging families who have never considered Nashville-area Catholic schools to enroll. The recipients of these grants will be given a discount in tuition for two years (50 percent off tuition in the first year and 25 percent off the second year) with the hope they will remain enrolled in the school after the grant expires. Financial need is not a prerequisite for this program, and applicants will need to meet the same admission requirements expected of all students at each school. Additional financial assistance may be available at the school and will be issued once financial need has been established.

We sincerely appreciate your commitment and support of St. Edward – without it, St. Edward would not be the school or community it is today. Therefore, I understand the first question you have regarding this program may be one of the fairness to you, our current families, who are already making the sacrifice and financial commitment to send their child to St. Edward. We believe that the ACE Welcome Grant program will benefit all students, as a rise in enrollment increases the financial stability of the school, enabling us to continue the legacy of providing a quality, affordable and accessible education for all students in the years to come.

If you have family or friends who have considered Catholic schools but haven't yet made the decision, we hope you will tell them about this new opportunity and encourage them to apply for an ACE Welcome Grant. The grants are available on a first-come, first-serve basis, so if you know someone who is interested, please tell them to apply early.

We truly believe in this new initiative and its ability to increase enrollment for St. Edward. If you have any questions about the program, please give me a call at (615) 540-1255.

Thank you again for all you do for St. Edward and for our Catholic community. I am grateful for your support and heartfelt concern for this special school.

Sincerely,


Rebecca Hammel