

**SCHOOL FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE STATUS REPORT NO. 2**

**TO**

**ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE PASTORAL COUNCIL**

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2002**

## CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	Pg. 1
II. SUMMARY OF SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS	Pg. 2
III. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS	Pg. 4
IV. SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT AND MODEL	Pg. 7
V. DEMOGRAPHICS, STUDENT POPULATION AND PHYSICAL PLANT	Pg. 12
VI. FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY	Pg. 17
VII. FAMILY INTERVIEWS	Pg. 32
APPENDICES	
A. Parish Goals Regarding a School Ministry	
B. Task Force Organization and Roster	

## I. INTRODUCTION

This is the second status report by the School Feasibility Task Force to the Pastoral Council in a continuing process of determining the feasibility of a St. Madeleine Sophie Parish school. This report coincides with the completion of the second phase of school feasibility work. Phase I was the development of a draft work program by a strategy committee, and the appointment of task force members by Fr. Jim Picton, Pastor. Phase II, the subject of this report, has included the following activities: 1. Review of adopted parish goals; 2. Development of a school Mission Statement and Model; 3. Testing and adaptation of the school model based on the demographics of our area, the capacity of the parish campus and facilities, the financial feasibility of operating a parish school, and preferences of parish families with prospective students. Phase III, as recommended in this report, would address the feasibility and timing of obtaining school facilities, and the preparation of an initial school planning program. It is anticipated that during Phase III and by Spring, 2003 the Pastoral Council, with the assistance of the task force, will fashion strategies for the following issues: The governance structure for a parish school; The preferred tuition model; The capability to serve a student population that is academically, economically and ethnically diverse.

This report updates and adds to the first status report of April 15, 2002. The changes and additions are based upon: 1. Additional demographic analysis provided by the Archdiocese for the Eastside Deanery; 2. Updated assumptions regarding school capital costs; 3. Questions and comments at the task force presentation to the parish on May 5, 2002; 4. Analyses of responses to interviews of parish families with prospective students; 5. Task force deliberations on the next steps in the school planning and feasibility process.

The task force welcomes questions, comments and direction from the Pastoral Council. Task force and subcommittee chairs will be happy to respond to Council questions and to provide such briefings as the Council may desire.

## II. SUMMARY OF SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The following are summaries of reports prepared by four subcommittees of the School Feasibility Task Force. The complete subcommittee reports are contained in sections IV. through VII. of this document.

### ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT & MODEL

*St. Madeleine Sophie School is dedicated to providing excellence in education in an environment of Catholic faith and moral values. We seek to develop Christian leadership by promoting active service in the wider community. Our graduates will be equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of life-long education in a diverse and complex world.*

St. Madeleine Sophie School is a fully approved and accredited preschool through grade 8 educational ministry of the parish. Our academic goal is the mastery of skills enabling students to achieve their greatest potential for success in high school and beyond. We strive to be a Catholic educational community that is welcoming, inclusive and as responsive as possible to the needs of all parish families who exhibit the desire to attend. As space is available, enrollment is opened to the larger community. Class size averages 24 students.

To assure as rich a diversity of student population as possible, special emphasis is given to recruiting staff who are skilled in teaching students within a broad range of learning abilities. So too, we are committed to administering a tuition plan in such a way that no parish family with a legitimate desire for a Catholic education will ever be turned away for financial reasons.

Most importantly, St. Madeleine Sophie School is a new extension of the broad mix of quality ministries at which the parish has long excelled. The program has been created to complement and enhance the community's outreach to parish youth and collaborates in all ways with the parish's Faith Formation goals, giving parents an additional resource to aid in their role as the primary educator of their children.

### DEMOGRAPHICS, STUDENT POPULATION AND PHYSICAL PLANT

The Demographics, Student Population and Physical Plant Committee gathered data from community sources to determine demographics, to assess the potential number of students that would attend a parish school and to integrate potential school facilities with the existing facility. The assumptions supported by Archdiocesan and internal parish data indicated that 20 or more local Catholic children would apply for each grade; And the school would have no difficulty filling spots in each of its grade levels. It was also determined that a 34,000 sq.ft. Educational Center meets the current standards set by K-8 schools and that size of facility could adequately fit on the current parish campus.

## FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

St. Madeleine Sophie parish can successfully operate a school from a financial perspective based upon the following considerations:

- It is believed that the school can be run at a comparable cost per pupil (\$7,000) with schools in the surrounding area.
- The school would need to operate at 85-90% of projected school capacity (24 students per class).
- Tuition is expected to be comparable to other eastside Catholic schools (financial model assumes tuition at 55-60% of school total costs).
- Parish financial support will be required during the years prior to the school opening, and will peak during the middle years of growing the enrollment.
- Capital costs and alternative facility options still need to be explored in more detail.

## INTERVIEWS OF PARISH FAMILIES

199 parish families with children ten years of age or younger were interviewed. Analyses of interview responses indicate strong support for the (P, K-8) grade structure as presented in the draft model. The analyses confirmed previous projections of student population and demand for a school. Recommendations related to future clarifications in the school model were made. Also, issues, which should be addressed or clarified in Pastoral Council outreach to the parish, were identified.

### **III. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS**

The next steps in the process of determining the feasibility of a St. Madeleine Sophie Parish school involve activities by the Pastoral Council and activities by the School Feasibility Task Force.

#### Pastoral Council.

The Pastoral Council should review this status report and obtain such clarifications and elaborations, as it desires from the School Feasibility Task Force. The Council should then undertake communication with the parish community in order to receive feedback on the planning and feasibility information developed to date. Communications could include distribution of summaries of this task force report, the conduct of town hall meetings, a parish survey, and/or such other outreach activities as the Council considers beneficial. The Task force would be available as a resource to the Council for communication activities.

Upon assessing the feedback from the parish community, the Council should direct the Task Force to continue the next phase of the school planning and feasibility studies, described below, with such amendments, as the council considers appropriate.

#### School Feasibility Task Force

The Task force should undertake the “Initial School Planning” presented in Attachment #1 below. The Task Force must give special attention to the integration of a school ministry into the existing parish Faith Formation Ministry. The objectives must include the preservation and enhancement of the Faith Formation Ministry.

The Task Force should undertake a school facilities study that includes the following tasks:

- Determine rooms available after construction of the parish community center;
- Investigate off-site opportunities for school facilities;
- Investigate the feasibility of portable school facilities;
- Update the estimate of school construction cost;
- Estimate the timing of a school capital campaign;
- Estimate the timing of school construction;
- Estimate the timing of a phased school start-up.

A timeline for Phase III is presented in below.

### III. INITIAL PLANNING PHASE

PLANNING COMMITTEE APPOINTED					
	A. ORGANIZATION PLANNING	B. ENROLLMENT PLANNING	C. FINANCIAL PLANNING	D. SITE PLANNING	E. INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING
	Sequential Steps	Sequential Steps	Sequential Steps	Sequential steps	Sequential Steps
September 2003	<p><b>Define organizational structure.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare draft Commission mission statement and Constitution.</li> <li>- Draft By-Laws.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommend timeline to engage an Administrator.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare job description for Administrator.</li> <li>- Develop list of candidates for school Administrator position.</li> <li>- Recommendation to engage an Administrator on 7/01/03</li> </ul>	<p><b>Finalize an enrollment philosophy and policy for review by Pastor and Pastoral Council.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey all parents seeking an initial expression of interest in enrolling.</li> <li>- Project first year enrollment based on available data.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Draft a funding philosophy and preferred strategy.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop strategy to communicate plan to parish and potential families.</li> <li>- Secure commitment of funds for the Planning Phases.</li> <li>- Refine a preliminary first year school expenditure projection, including capital needs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Confirm interim location.</b></p> <p><b>Establish minimum criteria for detailed development of permanent site.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft school component of parish master plan with City of Bellevue.</li> <li>- Finalize preliminary site proposal.</li> <li>- Begin final site development planning.</li> <li>- Develop a capital expenditure budget for potential facility including capital campaign timing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Refine guiding statements for resonant issues.</b></p> <p><i>(With special attention to: Interaction between parish faith formation and school program; Inclusive education and/ special needs students; Technology focus; Outreach/service education; Youth support services.)</i></p> <p><b>Draft philosophy statement for school mission.</b></p> <p><b>Develop a list of curricular, extracurricular and worship activities that meet instructional objectives.</b></p>
<p>III. INITIAL PLANNING PHASE</p> <p><u>Conclusion of Phase III</u></p> <p>Results of Initial Planning Phase indicate a <u>continuing commitment</u> to open a school.</p>					

**PHASE III TIMELINE 11/14/02**

		2002	2003							2004			
		S	J	O	N	D	F	M	A	M	J	D	F
<p align="center"><b>PHASE II - END OF PHASE REPORT</b></p> <p align="center">***** PASTORAL COUNCIL DECISION POINT *****</p>	Phase III Begins												
	<b>SCHOOL FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE</b> Chair: Bruce Laing	<p>Develops refined model. Estimates timing of start-up. <i>Review and adopt committee recommendations.</i> <i>Report to Pastoral Council.</i></p>		<p>Faith Formation design For Pastoral Council: School Governance structure. Tuition models.</p>		<p>Interim location: On-site rooms and modulars. Off-site locations. Partnerships. Permanent construction Site planning. Campaign design/timing. Cost projections for alternative scenarios</p>		<p>Assess potential for developed funds. Estimate timing of capital campaign.</p>		<p>Develop vision and implications of preferred local approach to accommodating students of special academic, social and physical abilities.</p>		<p>Communication Follow-up to family interviews. Phase II executive summary. Nature and timing of additional outreach to parish.</p>	
	<b>PARISH RELATIONSHIPS COMMITTEE</b> Chair: Fr. Jim												
	<b>SITE (FACILITIES) COMMITTEE</b> Chair: Deacon Gene												
	<b>FINANCE COMMITTEE</b> Chair: Jim McGinley												
	<b>INCLUSIVENESS COMMITTEE</b> Chair: (vacant)												
	<b>COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE</b> Chair: Ginny Morrissey												
<p align="center">***** PASTORAL COUNCIL DECISION POINT *****</p>													
<p align="center"><b>Pastoral Council sponsored Discussions*</b></p>													
<p align="center">Continue to refine model based upon input.</p>													
<p align="center"><b>Interim report to Pastoral Council</b></p>													
<p align="center">***** PASTORAL COUNCIL DECISION POINT *****</p>													
<p align="center">Continue to refine model based upon input.</p>													
<p align="center">Possible prospective family survey of new model(s).</p>													
<p align="center">Interviews for new school head</p>													
<p align="center">New Head selected by Pastor to start July 1</p>													

#### **IV. SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT AND MODEL**

Subcommittee: Sharon Glen, Co-Chair;  
Trish David, Co-Chair;  
Dee Huff;  
Kim McCreave

Consultants: Dan Sherman, Executive Director: Washington Federation of  
Independent Schools;  
Marilyn Geiger, OSF, Pastoral Associate, St. Anne Parish;  
Julie Callahan, SMS Parish Faith Formation Office;  
Jo David, SMS Parish Faith Formation Office

**THIS MODEL IS HYPOTHETICAL  
AND IS PRESENTED FOR DISCUSSION.**

**NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.  
SUGGESTIONS FOR MODIFICATIONS OR ALTERNATIVES ARE WELCOME.**

**ANY "PARTICULARS" THAT YOU SEE IN THIS MODEL (FOR EXAMPLE, A  
STRUCTURE OF GRADES (P) K-8) ARE DISCUSSION STARTING POINTS, AND  
ARE NOT INTENDED TO PRECLUDE OTHER POSSIBILITIES.**

**WE HAVE FRAMED THIS DRAFT MODEL WITHIN AN OVERALL CONTEXT  
THAT COMPLIES WITH STATE LAW AND ARCHDIOCESAN POLICY SO THAT  
PARISHIONERS CAN SEE WHAT A COMPLETED MISSION STATEMENT MIGHT  
LOOK LIKE.**

## **ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT AND MODEL**

*St. Madeleine Sophie School is dedicated to providing excellence in education in an environment of Catholic faith and moral values. We seek to develop Christian leadership by promoting active service in the wider community. Our graduates will be equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of further education in a diverse and complex world.*

St. Madeleine Sophie School is a fully approved and accredited (P)K-8 elementary and middle school ministry of the parish community. It is our goal to assist parents in their role of guiding their children to positively influence an increasingly diverse and technologically complex world through leadership, knowledge, respect and service. Graduates have demonstrated mastery of skills enabling them to achieve their greatest potential for success in high school.

Following the model of our parish patron, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart, we strive to be a Christian educational community that is welcoming, inclusive and as responsive as possible to the needs of all parish families who exhibit the desire to attend. As space is available, enrollment is opened to the community.

Class size averages 24 students. We take great pride in directing available staff resources to aid classroom instruction in support of a diverse range of educational and social needs. With the preschool, daycare and support programs included, our school program serves families year-round from 6:00am until 6:30pm.

### **ADMISSIONS**

St. Madeleine Sophie School provides an opportunity for education to any child who wishes to attend and who exhibits the desire to grow in this spirit. A concerted effort is made to attract students of all backgrounds from within the parish as well as non-parishioners. We commit to providing ways to make this opportunity accessible for all families.

Priority is given to families who are active parish members. This is defined as households who are: (1) Registered in the parish office; (2) Active in the life of the parish (*i.e., Attend Sunday Mass and regularly receive the Sacraments*); (3) Involved in one of the many ministry areas of the Parish; and (4) Make regular contributions through the Sunday envelope (*i.e., Annually filing a sacrificial pledge card with the parish office and show a consistent effort to meet the pledge.*)

### **FINANCES**

The school ministry of the parish represents a substantial investment of time, talent and treasure by the entire community. Through a blend of tuition, parish support (*subsidy*), development (*annual appeal, endowments, planned giving, fund raising, etc.*) volunteerism and prayer, resources are gathered to meet an annual operational cost to the parish approaching \$7,000 per each student served. We are committed to a mix of

revenue that maintains a balance between sources and never hinders the parish's ability to continue the broad mix of quality ministries at which it has excelled. At the same time, our tuition plan is established in such a way that no parish family legitimately desirous of a Catholic education will ever be turned away for financial reasons.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our curricular structure is designed within a framework of *an educational community for the new century* - shaped by a Catholic world-view - which empowers students toward the animation of "We" rather than "Me."

*Through daily association with families and professionally qualified faculty visibly committed to a Christian lifestyle, this school provides opportunities for the student to develop a personal commitment to Gospel values.*

*By developing basic educational skills, both in communication and reasoning, we provide the framework necessary for students to take their role in society's intelligent decision-makers of the future.*

*In kindling an appreciation for membership in the larger community, we strive to develop each student's awareness of his/her responsibility to that larger group and the call for a personal pledge to justice and service within that framework.*

The school faculty oversees a continual process of curriculum development geared toward mastery of a high school preparatory program according to the capability of the individual child. The teaching methods used are varied and contemporary; an outgrowth of sound learning theory. The curriculum is enhanced by teachers, students, and parents working together to bring meaningful learning experiences to children.

At St. Madeleine Sophie School, we believe that there are certain skills, knowledge and experiences that are central to Catholic education. These have been structured into an integrated and coordinated set of courses in which all students participate.

The curriculum integrates the following subjects: Religion, Language Arts (*reading, writing, spelling, English, speaking, listening*), Mathematics, Social Studies (*geography, history, civics*), Science, Music, Art, Physical Education and Health. Family life, substance abuse education and lessons in personal safety, among others, are co-curriculars offered during the school year.

The Primary and Intermediate blocks (Grades Pre-5) are considered self-contained, although teachers freely group and exchange resources within the departments when appropriate. The Middle School block (Grades 6, 7, 8) is departmentalized with a teacher serving as homeroom teacher as well as a specialist in one or two core curricular areas (*e.g. Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science.*) All students receive formal physical education, performing arts and world language instruction from a specialist. Counseling, learning resource, health and additional support staff for children with special needs are provided as situations warrant and resources allow.

## **STAFF**

To accomplish this awesome task, we strive to recruit staff who:

- Recognize that all children can learn and hold high expectations for the success of each student.
- Teach in ways that empower all students regardless of economic, religious, cultural, familial or educational differences.
- Establish standards that honor diversity and the values of justice, tolerance, community and relationships.
- Remain visionary and innovative in all forms of outstanding instructional practice.
- Engage in ongoing curriculum development that is authentically rooted in problem solving and higher-order skills.
- Are committed to continuous professional development, especially in the areas of special needs, learning styles, technology and catechetical advancement.
- Recognize that the leadership to achieve this end is shared collaboratively, not directionally, and each member has a responsibility to participate in the betterment of the whole.
- Remember that the faculty is not alone on this journey. Education at St. Madeleine Sophie School is not something done "to" or "for" families, but "with" them.

## **GOVERNANCE**

While the oversight for diocesan and parish educational management flows from the Archbishop to the Pastor, this is done within a framework of collaboration with many individuals and consultative groups.

At St. Madeleine Sophie School, the decision making process moves from broad to specific actions with each level entrusted to a specific group or person. A unique blend of Pastor, Administration, Parish Pastoral Council, School Commission, Faith Formation staff and Commission, Finance Council, Development Committee, Parent Association and a number of other groups, all might take a role in formulating an end product.

Specifically, the School Commission is established as an advisory body to the Pastor and Principal in the area of strategic planning and policy.

## **V. DEMOGRAPHICS, STUDENT POPULATION AND PHYSICAL PLANT**

Subcommittee: Mary Anne D'Ambrosio, Chair:  
Pam Armstrong;  
Stacey Driggers;  
Angela Ensminger;

Consultant: Mary Beth Celio, Archdiocese of Seattle

# **Report**

## **Demographic, Student Population & Physical Plant Sub Committee**

The Demographic, Student Population & Physical Plant Sub Committee (Demographics Sub Committee) was tasked with gathering data from community sources to determine demographics, to assess the potential number of students that would attend a St. Madeleine Sophie parish school and to integrate potential school facilities with existing facilities.

## **Scope**

Phase II of the process to plan and implement a school for St. Madeleine Sophie requires research into the feasibility of planning, implementing, and ultimately maintaining a school. The Demographics Sub Committee was asked to focus on two areas: student enrollment and site planning. To provide useful information in this phase of planning, the subcommittee was asked to assess the potential number of students based on information available from the community as well as parish records and to assess the availability of land for building an appropriate school and the potential for the use of existing parish facilities, keeping in mind that any school facilities would need to be available for general parish use as well.

## **Introduction**

To provide the School Feasibility Task Force with the information requested, the Demographics Subcommittee divided the work into two distinctive pieces. The first piece addressed the potential number of students that a St. Madeleine Sophie school might draw from the surrounding community, both internal and external to the parish. The second piece focused on the potential for placing a school building on the St. Madeleine Sophie Parish campus and whether or not such a building would meet the educational needs and desires of the parish.

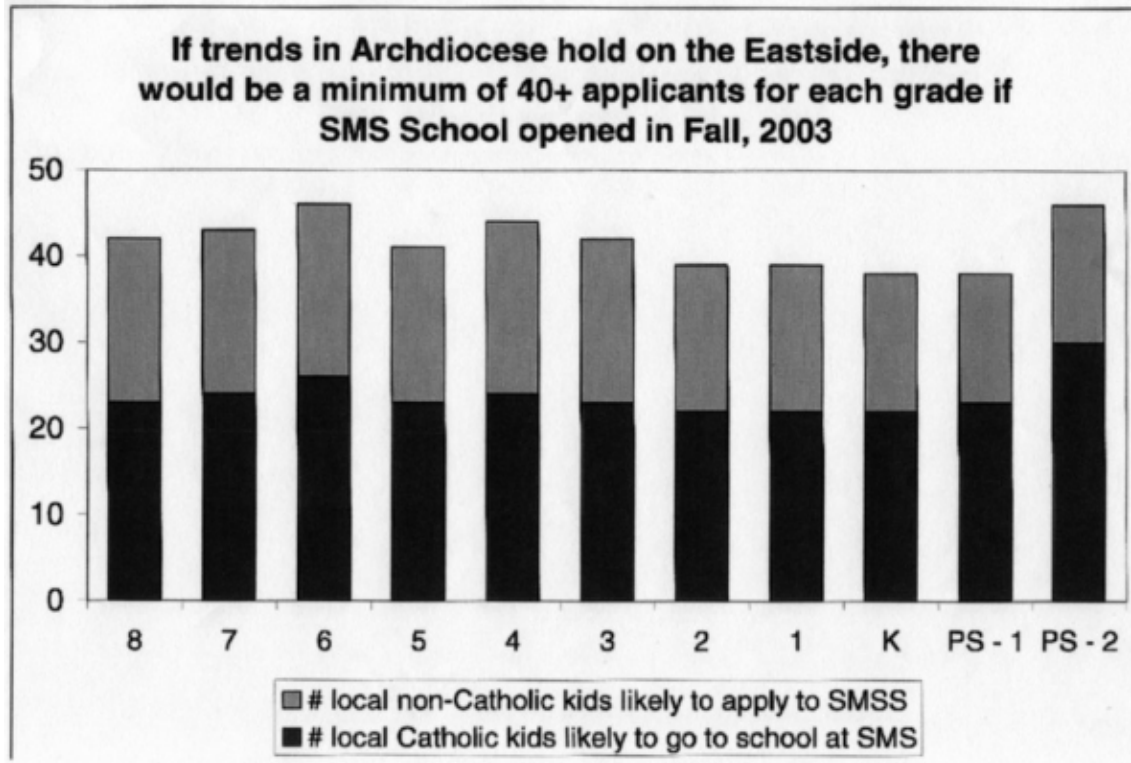
## **Student Population**

Both community sources and parish member information were used to determine the potential student population for a P-8 elementary and middle school. Among data received from the community were:

- National/Regional sources,
- Parish baptismal data,
- Zip code data from local private schools, and
- Interview data.

## National/Regional Sources

Mary Beth Celio, demographer for the diocese, has studied national and regional data as it pertains to the future of Catholic schools in the Seattle area. Data sources include the 2000 US Census broken out by parish boundaries, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and parish reports. Recently, she provided a graph (reproduced below for this report) showing the potential number of applicants per grade for a parish school opening in 2003. The graph assumes that trends in the archdiocese can be applied to the Eastside.



The graph indicates that 20+ local Catholic children would apply for admission to a parish school at St. Madeleine Sophie and an additional 15+ non-catholic children would apply to each grade for in a K-8 school. Based on this data, a parish school would have no difficulty filling spots for 24 students per grade if a school were to open in 2003. In addition, Mary Beth has indicated that she believes that there is not only enough demand to fill another Catholic school on the Eastside, but that a new school would actually increase demand for private education from both Catholics and non-Catholics because of increased visibility (for private education) within the community and increased interest among community members.

An Eastside Deanery report prepared recently by Mary Beth Celio supports the demographic analysis shown above.

## Parish Baptismal Data

Parish baptismal data provided by the Archdiocese (see table below) indicates that more than 60 infants have been baptized annually in the parish over the last four years. These infants will be reaching school age when a parish school is started.

### Number of Infant Baptisms Per Year at St. Mads

1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
66	67	69	91

There were 32 infant baptisms during the period August, 2001 through March, 2002.

## Zip Code Data from Local Private Schools

Information pertaining to the number of families living within the St. Madeleine Sophie parish boundary and enrolling students in area Catholic and other private schools was obtained to assess the interest for private school education among families within the parish boundary. ZIP codes within the parish boundary include 98006, 98056, and 98059. The majority of the data came from school directories. Conversations with school officials provided additional data; these numbers are shown in parentheses. In some cases, no data was available as is indicated in the table by ND.

**Table. Families Enrolled in Local Private Schools**

		ZIP Code		
		98006	98056	98059
	Sacred Heart	30 (25)	10	ND
	St. Anthony	(1)	ND	ND
	St. Joseph	12	2	6
	St. Louise	37 (42)	3	ND
	St. Monica	25	14	ND
	Bear Creek School	4	ND	ND
	Eaton School	22	ND	ND
	Forest Ridge	79	7	ND
	Open Window	49	ND	ND
	Bellevue Christian	49	ND	ND

The data indicate that approximately 105 families from the 98006 ZIP code attend local Catholic schools and another 154 families have enrolled students in other local private

schools. From the 98056 ZIP code, 29 families send children to Catholic schools while at least 7 families enroll children in other private schools. The data provide an indication that there is interest among families within the parish boundary for private school education. In addition, the information also provides an indication of the ability for a private school to draw students from surrounding areas.

### **Interview Data**

Interviews of parishioners with young children have been completed. Analyses of the responses to the interviews support the demographic analysis in this subcommittee report. See the Interview Subcommittee Report for their analyses.

## **School Facilities**

The feasibility of physically placing a Parish Education Center on the St. Madeleine Sophie Parish campus was previously reviewed and culminated in May 1998 with the development of architectural feasibility study of a three-story, 34,600 sq. ft. building containing administrative offices, nine classrooms, a gymnasium, a library, a music room, computer lab space, and a kitchen. The site, located directly south of the main church building and on the south side of the access road, included an outdoor asphalt play area and limited parking for faculty and administrators.

Assuming a population of 24 students in each of nine grades, (216 total students), the building allows approximately 160 square feet of space per child. According to a study published by the American School and University Education Construction Report, published in May 2000, current space allocations for children in grades K-8 range from 80 to 110 square feet per child and proposed allocations suggest increasing this range to provide 110 to 130 square feet per child. A building the size of the Parish Education Center modeled in 1998 not only meets standards set by schools today, but also exceeds the suggested increase in space allocation.

Please note that the previous study is being presented only as an indication that a footprint of a school facility is feasible on the St. Madeleine Sophie campus; financial feasibility of a school facility was not analyzed. In addition, use of the previous study in no way means that St. Madeleine Sophie is tied into a particular design and/or location. If the Parish Council decides to continue beyond the feasibility phase, some discussion will need to take place to determine what the school design should encompass and how best to use the land available on the St. Madeleine Sophie Parish Campus.

## **VI. FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY**

Subcommittee: Jim McGinley, Chair;  
Dennis Kibby;  
Bill Palmer;  
Maynard Polkinghorn

Consultant: Dan Sherman. Executive Director Washington Federation of  
Independent Schools



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# **St. Madeleine Sophie School**

- Financial Recommendation

Financial Feasibility Sub-Committee

August 30, 2002

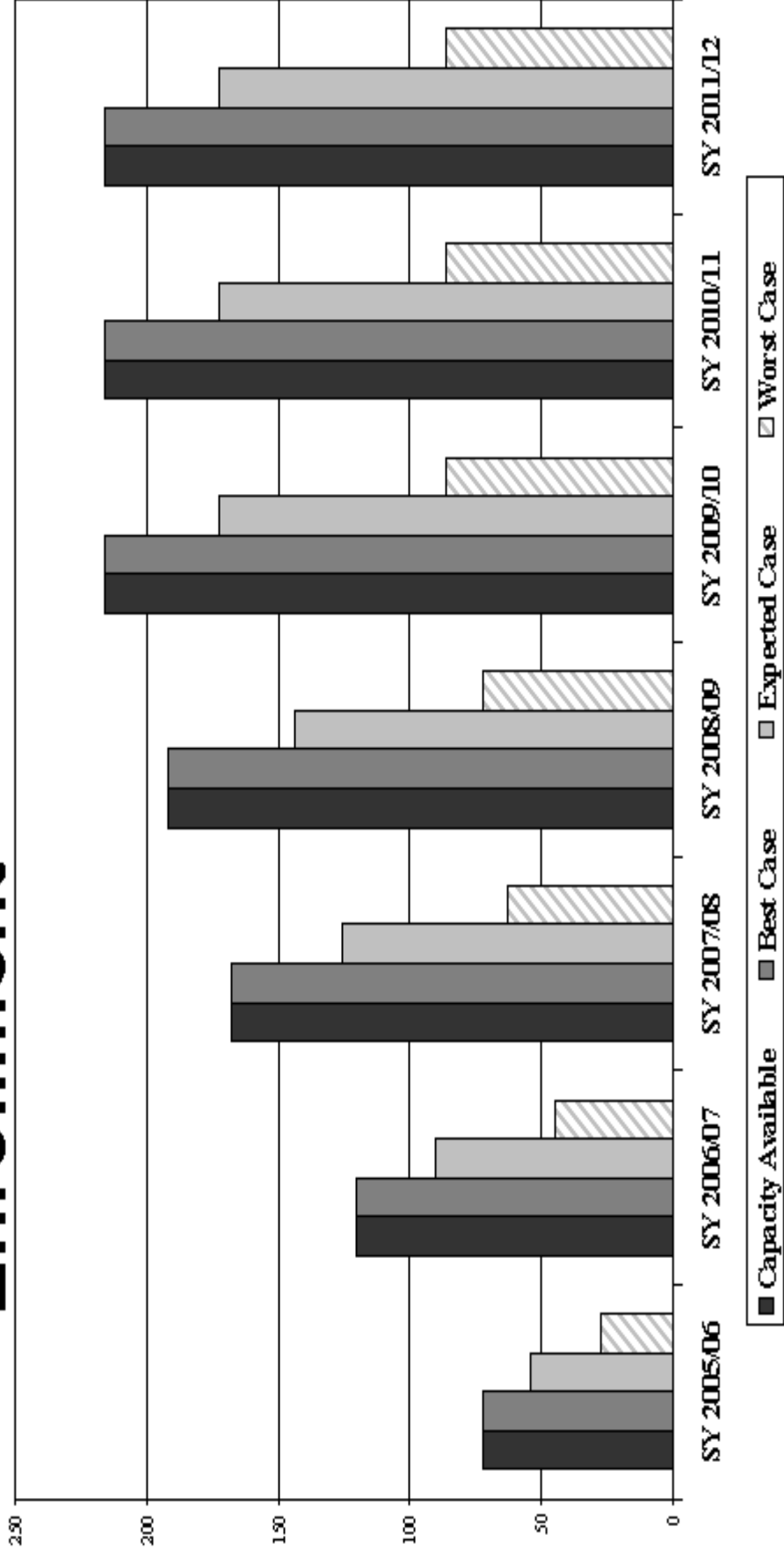
# Agenda

- Key Assumptions
  - ◆ Enrollment
  - ◆ School Specialists
  - ◆ Fundraising
  - ◆ Revenue Contingency
- Net Direct Parish Support Required
- Cost Per Pupil (CPP)
- Recommendation
- Key Timeline

# Key Assumptions

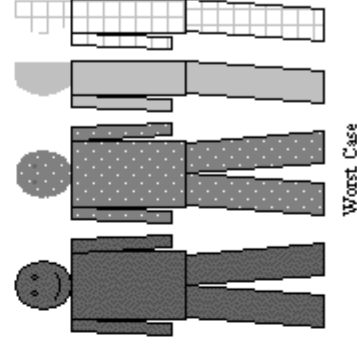
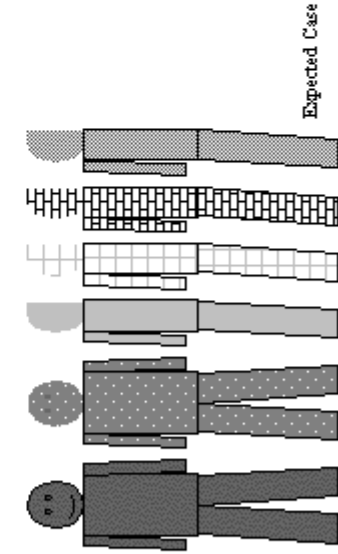
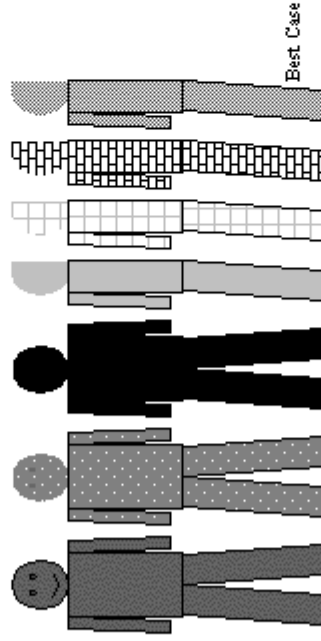
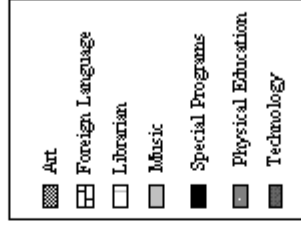
	Best Case	Expected Case	Worst Case
<b>Enrollment</b>	100%	85%	50%
<b>Specialists</b>	5 Full Time	4 Full Time	3 Full Time
<b>Special Programs</b>	St. Madeleine Sophie will provide a preschool program, an after school program and a full summer program. The summer program will not be offered.		
<b>Revenue Contingency</b>	5.0% of Revenue Contributed to Fund	Revenue Contingency Fund Built with 2.5% of Revenues	
<b>Tuition Per Student</b>	Average tuition per student will stay the same at \$3,830 using a stewardship model for tuition. The actual development of the tuition rate table will need to be completed in the future.		
<b>Teacher Salaries</b>	St. Madeleine Sophie school will rely on experienced teachers to develop the reputation and curriculum. Salaries will be at market rate for the area.		
<b>Fundraising and Development</b>	From \$1.5k to \$333k over 9 years	From \$1.5k to \$291k over 9 years	From \$1.5k to \$247k over 9 years
<b>Endowment</b>	While it is anticipated that a significant effort will be made to build an endowment, it is assumed that all investment returns will be added to the endowment until it reaches \$2,000,000.		
<b>Facilities</b>	Space available will be 3 classrooms in 2004/05 and 5 classrooms in 2005/06 from existing space. New facilities will be available in 2006/07. Depreciation of these facilities is contained in the Costs Provided but is assumed an indirect support item from the parish.		
<b>Current Year \$</b>	All financial scenarios were done in constant current year dollars without change for inflation.		

# Enrollment

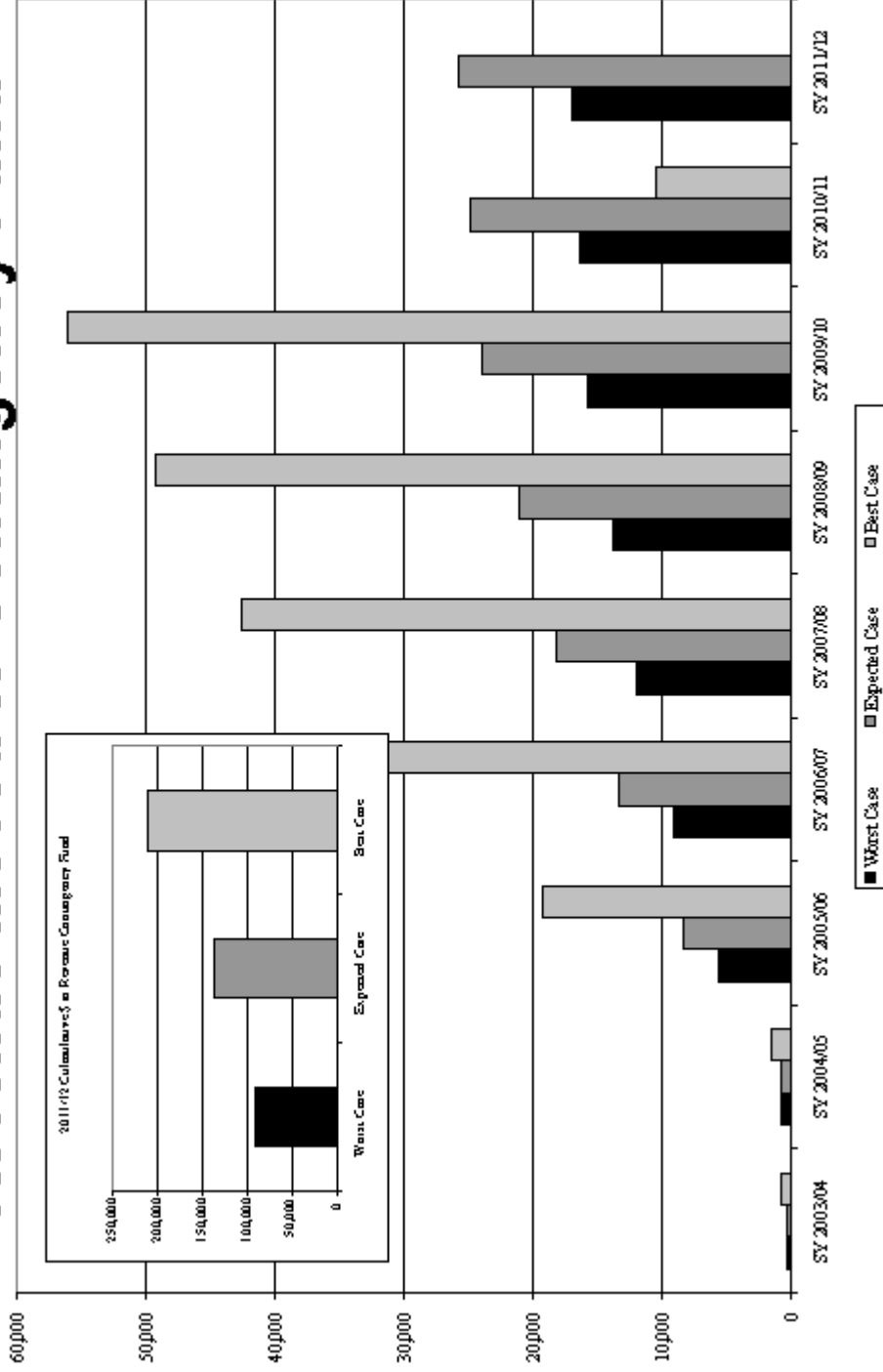


# Specialists

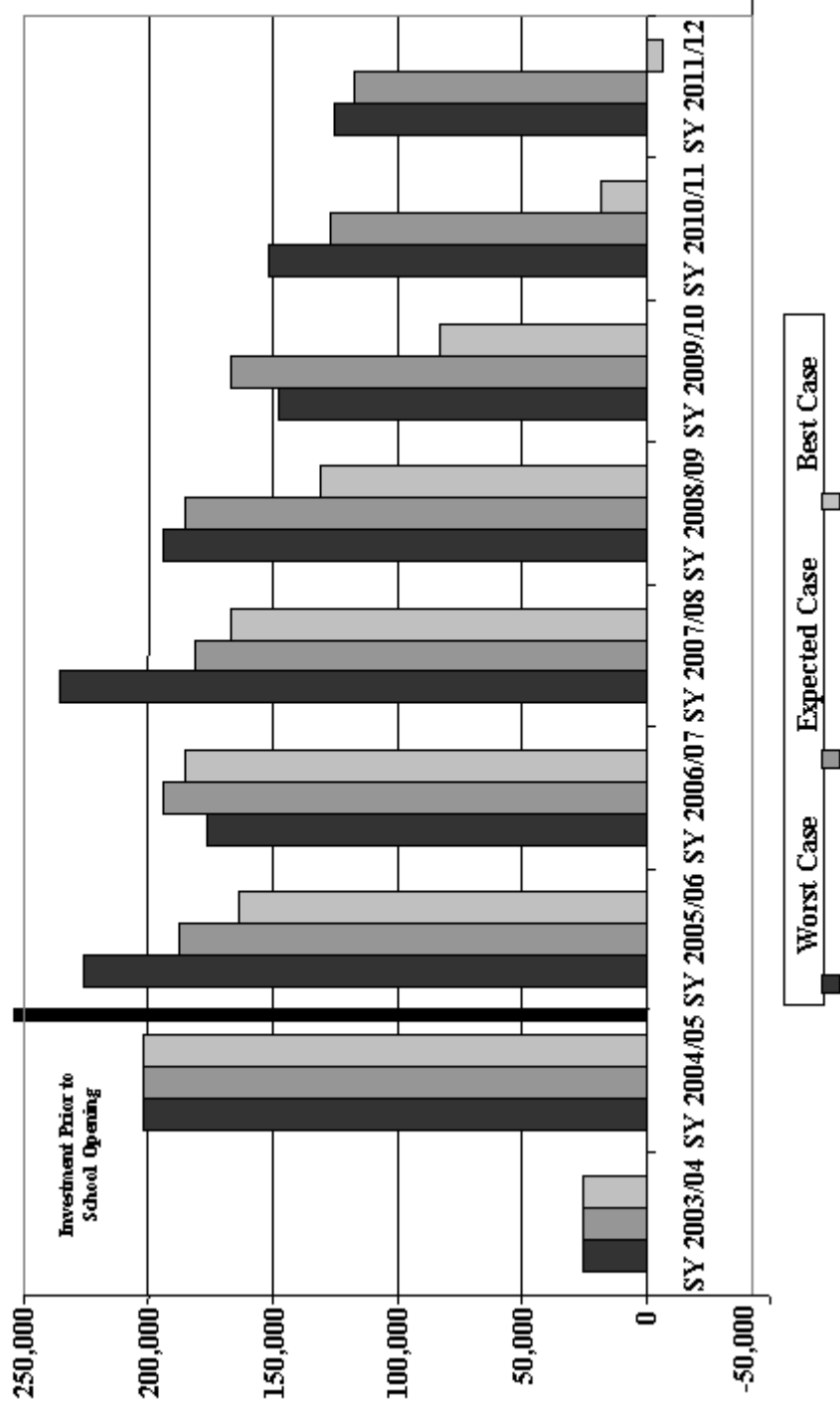
- The number of teaching specialist staffed by St. Madeleine Sophie School will be based upon affordability. The goal is to have as robust a special activities program as possible. In all scenarios, specialists will be hired over time as enrollment grows.



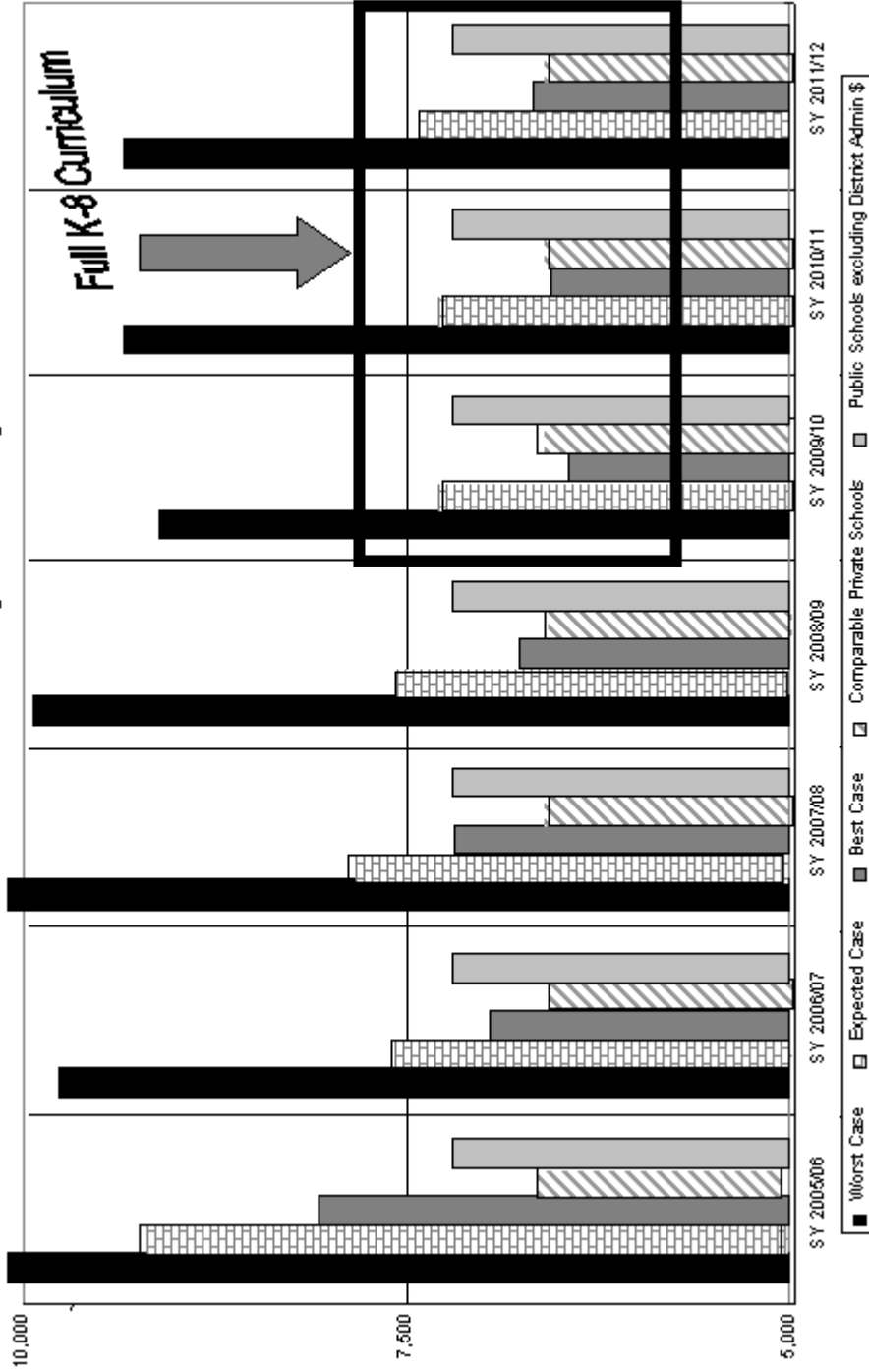
# Revenue Moved to Contingency Fund



# Net Direct Parish Support \$



# Cost Per Pupil (CPP)

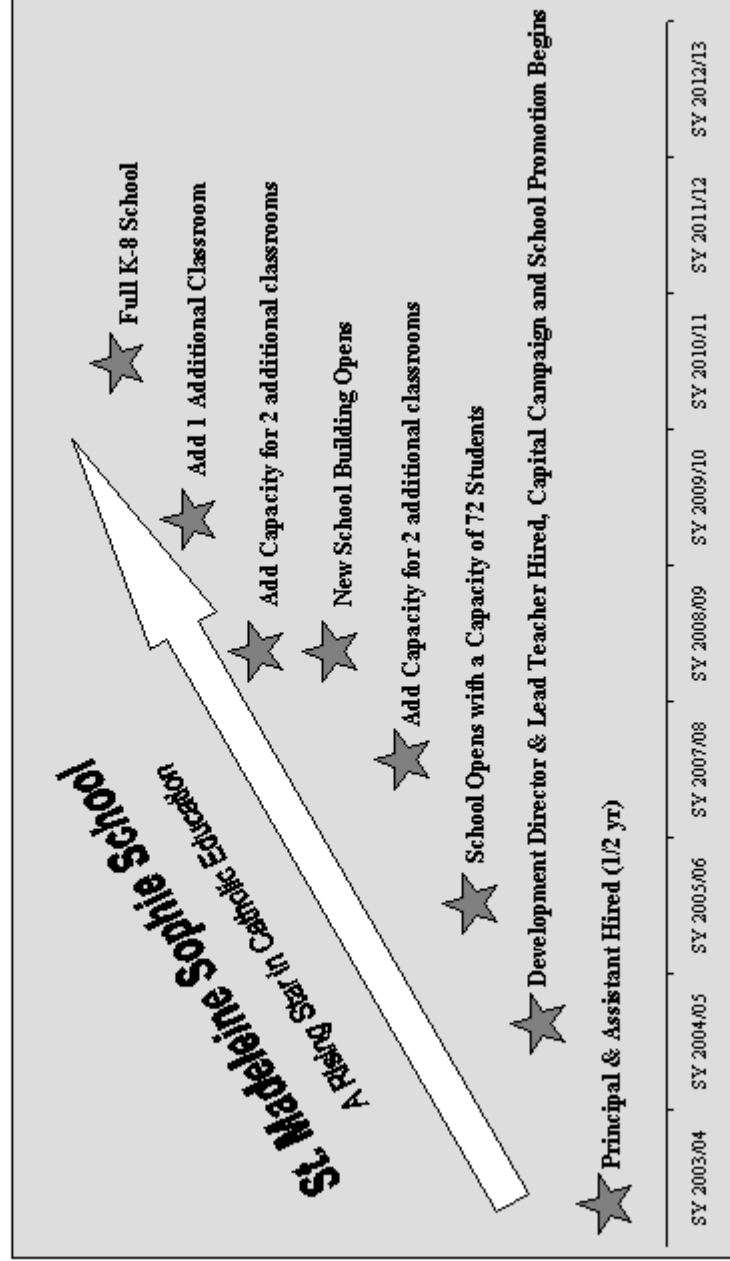


# Financial Feasibility Recommendation

St Madeline Sophie can successfully operate a school from a financial perspective based upon the following considerations:

- ◆ It is believed that the school can be run at a comparable cost per pupil with schools in the surrounding area.
- ◆ The school will need to operate within the parameters of the "expected" and "best" case scenarios evaluated.
- ◆ Parish surveys indicate sufficient enrollment potential to accommodate the above scenarios paying an average of \$3,850 tuition.
- ◆ Financial support will need to be provided for 1 1/2 years prior to the school opening.
- ◆ Direct support from the parish will peak during the middle years of growing the enrollment.
- ◆ We have assumed, without any in-depth analysis, that \$9,000,000 is adequate capital to build the school and that the parish will meet this requirement.
- ◆ Important assumptions about facility availability to start classes prior to the school being built need to be assessed.

# Key Timing



# Appendix Slides

# High Level P&L – Best Case

	SY 2003/04	SY 2004/05	SY 2005/06	SY 2006/07	SY 2007/08	SY 2008/09	SY 2009/10	SY 2010/11	SY 2011/12
<b>Revenue</b>									
Tuition & Registration Fee Revenue	0	0	291,600	486,000	680,400	777,600	874,800	874,800	874,800
Fundraising and Development	15,000	30,000	97,200	142,000	176,800	215,200	254,700	293,010	332,651
Endowment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowance for Uncollectable Accounts	0	0	(2,772)	(4,620)	(6,468)	(7,392)	(8,316)	(8,316)	(8,316)
Total Revenue	15,000	30,000	386,028	623,380	850,732	985,408	1,121,184	1,159,494	1,199,135
<b>Revenue Moved to Contingency Fund</b>	(750)	(1,500)	(19,301)	(31,169)	(42,357)	(49,270)	(56,059)	(10,414)	0
<b>Total Revenue for School Operations</b>	14,250	28,500	366,727	592,211	808,195	936,138	1,065,125	1,149,080	1,199,135
<b>Expenditures</b>									
Salaries	0	56,145	232,820	413,213	563,731	644,821	725,902	750,532	775,163
Administration	63,379	188,366	241,652	241,409	279,638	279,610	279,571	279,610	279,647
Less: Indirect Support	(6,250)	(6,250)	(6,250)	(12,500)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
School Operations & Curriculum	12,800	14,700	62,943	88,575	114,972	126,013	137,054	137,439	137,824
Facilities	5,000	12,000	43,890	91,200	322,860	323,340	323,620	323,620	323,620
Less: Indirect Support	0	0	0	0	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)
<b>Total Expenditures for School Operations</b>	74,929	264,962	575,054	821,897	1,031,221	1,123,784	1,216,347	1,241,401	1,266,454
<b>Net Contribution from Special Programs</b>	0	0	0	0	11,502	11,796	23,072	29,050	29,050
<b>Direct Parish Support</b>	(80,679)	(236,462)	(208,328)	(229,686)	(211,524)	(175,849)	(128,150)	(63,270)	(38,289)
Parish Savings From Reduction in Assessments	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Parish Savings From School Property Tax Exclusions	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Net Direct Parish (Support)/Benefit</b>	(25,679)	(201,462)	(163,328)	(184,686)	(166,524)	(130,849)	(83,150)	(18,270)	6,731

# High Level P&L – Expected Case

	SY 2003/04	SY 2004/05	SY 2005/06	SY 2006/07	SY 2007/08	SY 2008/09	SY 2009/10	SY 2010/11	SY 2011/12
<b>Revenue</b>									
Tuition & Registration Fee Revenue	0	0	243,000	403,000	567,000	648,000	729,000	729,000	729,000
Fundraising and Development	15,000	30,000	91,500	135,500	166,500	200,750	236,100	270,660	306,551
Endowment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowance for Uncollectible Accounts	0	0	(2,310)	(3,820)	(5,390)	(6,160)	(6,920)	(6,920)	(6,920)
Total Revenue	15,000	30,000	332,190	536,650	728,110	842,590	938,170	992,730	1,028,621
<b>Revenue Moved to Contingency Fund</b>	(375)	(750)	(8,305)	(13,416)	(18,203)	(21,065)	(23,954)	(24,818)	(25,716)
<b>Total Revenues for School Operations</b>	14,625	29,250	323,885	523,234	709,907	821,525	934,216	967,912	1,002,905
<b>Expenditures</b>									
Salaries	0	56,145	220,057	363,319	469,519	593,147	688,454	688,454	713,087
Administration	63,979	188,366	241,645	241,314	279,865	279,838	279,799	279,799	279,834
Less: Indirect Support	(6,250)	(6,250)	(6,250)	(12,500)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
School Operations & Curriculum	12,800	14,700	57,053	79,163	102,048	111,481	120,865	121,184	121,513
Facilities	5,000	12,000	43,650	90,800	322,300	322,700	323,100	323,100	323,100
Less: Indirect Support	0	0	0	0	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)
<b>Total Expenditures for School Operations</b>	74,929	264,962	556,155	762,095	943,731	1,059,167	1,162,218	1,162,537	1,187,534
<b>Net Contribution from Special Programs</b>	0	0	0	0	7,320	7,468	16,454	22,792	22,792
<b>Direct Parish Support</b>	(60,304)	(253,712)	(252,270)	(258,861)	(226,304)	(230,174)	(211,548)	(171,833)	(161,837)
Parish's savings From Reduction in Assessments	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Parish's savings From School Property Tax Exclusions	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Net Direct Parish Support</b>	(25,304)	(200,712)	(187,270)	(193,861)	(181,304)	(185,174)	(166,548)	(126,833)	(116,837)

# High Level P&L – Worst Case

	SY 2003/04	SY 2004/05	SY 2005/06	SY 2006/07	SY 2007/08	SY 2008/09	SY 2009/10	SY 2010/11	SY 2011/12
<b>Revenue</b>									
Tuition & Registration Fee Revenue	0	0	143,800	243,000	340,200	388,800	437,400	437,400	437,400
Fundraising and Development	15,000	30,000	78,600	121,000	143,400	168,100	198,900	219,700	246,850
Endowment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowance for Uncollectible Accounts	0	0	(1,386)	(2,310)	(3,294)	(3,696)	(4,158)	(4,158)	(4,158)
Total Revenue	15,000	30,000	223,014	361,690	480,306	553,204	632,142	652,932	680,093
<b>Revenue Moved to Contingency Fund</b>	(375)	(750)	(5,575)	(9,042)	(12,009)	(13,830)	(15,804)	(16,324)	(17,002)
<b>Total Revenues for School Operations</b>	14,625	29,250	217,439	352,648	468,337	539,374	616,338	636,628	663,091
<b>Expenditures</b>									
Salaries	0	56,145	168,225	199,741	323,750	350,340	374,955	399,575	399,575
Administration	63,379	188,366	241,065	240,961	279,723	279,781	279,835	279,885	279,885
Less: Indirect Support	(6,250)	(6,250)	(6,250)	(12,500)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
School Operations & Curriculum	12,800	14,700	46,212	60,130	76,781	81,797	86,887	87,010	87,197
Facilities	5,000	12,000	38,370	85,200	316,380	316,620	316,880	316,880	316,880
Less: Indirect Support	0	0	0	0	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(225,000)
<b>Total Expenditures for School Operations</b>	74,929	264,962	488,632	573,532	748,614	778,558	806,537	833,328	833,516
<b>Net Contribution from Special Programs</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Direct Parish Support</b>	(60,304)	(235,712)	(271,194)	(220,884)	(280,257)	(239,164)	(192,199)	(196,700)	(170,426)
Parish Savings From Reduction in Assessments	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Parish Savings From School Property Tax Exclusions	0	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Net Direct Parish Support</b>	(25,304)	(200,712)	(226,194)	(175,884)	(235,257)	(194,164)	(147,199)	(151,700)	(125,426)

## **VII. FAMILY INTERVIEWS**

Subcommittee: Ginny Morrissey, Chair;  
Maryann Jenkins;  
Linda & Bob Van Hare

Consultant: Judy Vitzthum, Archdiocese of Seattle  
Mary Beth Celio, Archdiocese of Seattle

## INTERVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The purpose of the Interview Subcommittee was to interview parents of children who would be potential students for St. Madeleine Sophie School, assuming a school opening in 3 to 4 years; And to analyze the responses to the interviews.

The families chosen for the study have children ten years old or younger, and are registered in the parish, Faith Formation, and/or Mothers and Others group. A list of approximately 350 families was given to Judy Vitzthum, a consultant for the Archdiocese and a "neutral" listener, who conducted the interviews via telephone during May, June and July 2002. A total of 199 were completed. Mary Beth Celio from the Archdiocesan Office of Planning and Research studied the results and provided an analysis of the data.

The conclusion was that the interview responses indicate strong support for the (P, K-8) grade structure as presented in the draft model, and the analyses confirmed our previous projections of student population and demand for a school. Recommendations related to future clarifications in the school model were made. Also, issues which should be addressed or clarified in our outreach to the parish were identified. Examples of these issues are:

1. School/Parish relationship, School/Faith Formation relationship (for example, how would sacramental preparation be handled?) We need to make clear that a school would not decrease the strength of Faith Formation or Youth Group, and that a school would not diminish the community as it is.
2. Emphasize that a commitment will be made to include all parish families, regardless of their financial ability to pay full cost.
3. Make sure educational and financial plans are clear in the school model.

The following items are attached below: 1. Pastor's letter transmitting interview questions to parish families; 2. Interview questions; 3. Summary statistical analysis of interview responses, by Mary Beth Celio; 4. Summary of interview comments and perspectives, by Judy Vitzthum.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

Greetings and blessings to you in this time of renewal and growth in our parish community. I am writing to request the special help of your attention, thought and response in moving forward in undertaking the ministry of a parish Catholic school at St. Madeleine Sophie.

You may know that, in response to last year's survey of parishioners, the Parish Pastoral Council and I have set a course of planning and ministerial development to expand and upgrade our parish facilities. Phase I, addresses the most immediate and pressing ministry needs requiring structural improvements to our existing plant.

A Phase II is the result of a majority of parishioners expressing a desire to begin a Catholic School, to build a multipurpose gymnasium and to restore the previous rectory as a priests' residence. In response, the Pastoral Council and I concluded that there should be a parish school unless it is determined to be not feasible.

Bruce Laing has been serving us as chairperson of a Task Force to determine school feasibility. Excellent work has been accomplished thus far. Here is where we need your help: You are receiving this letter because our parish registry shows your family includes children who are or will be of school age (PK-8) within the next few years. In other words, your family is one among the primary group of parishioners for whom the community would engage in such a long-term commitment: All parishioners are inherently invested in the Catholic upbringing of our community's children.

You will find enclosed a hypothetical model for a parochial school, meant to serve as a starting point for discussion. We have not yet decided that a PK – 8 school will be the model chosen. My request is that you read through this model at least TWICE - - once just to gain basic familiarity; and a second time pausing to weigh each component from the perspective of parents whose child/children would be eligible to enroll. Make notes right on the page when various items strike you as: good... not so good... needing better description or more information... "keep this element no matter what!" ... "Why would/should this be included?" ...etc. What do you find attractive or compelling? What might raise a concern or give you pause? Is something missing that you would want to see incorporated? And, finally, if we were to open a parish school at St. Madeleine Sophie, how likely would you be to enroll your children in it? What might cause you to hesitate? What assurances might you need?

Within the next few weeks you will be contacted by Judy Vitzthum, whom we have engaged to manage this interview and discernment process. A long time special projects consultant for the Archdiocese, and a research associate for the University of Washington's Center on Reinventing Public Education, Judy is a "neutral" listener with whom you can be most candid; her task is to gather your comments, concerns and suggestions and report them to the Task Force and to me.

Please be assured that you are not being asked to make a commitment at this time. These interviews - which should take only 10-15 minutes of your time - are being done for the following reasons:

- a) To assess whether there are sufficient numbers of "likely" students to warrant continuing feasibility and planning work;
- b) To test a hypothetical model school with real parents/families in order to learn what modifications would be most suited to our particular community;
- c) To engage parishioners in genuine dialogue about our future directions, ministries and pastoral supports.

I am very grateful to you for giving this your attention and for taking the time to pray, reflect and add your important insight to this community process. If you know other parish families (with young children) who did not receive this mailing, please urge them to call the parish office so that they can be included.

Sincerely yours,

Very Reverend James D. Picton

## Interview Questions for Parents of Young Children

0. [List Code] \_\_\_\_\_
1. What is your ZIP code? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Currently registered in what parish(es)? \_\_\_\_\_  
a) If not St. Mad, please comment on reason: \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the approximate distance between your home and St. Madeleine Sophie? \_\_\_\_\_ mi.
4. Number of children 8-10 yrs. of age \_\_\_\_\_  
a) Where do they currently go to school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of children 5-7 years of age \_\_\_\_\_  
a) Where do they currently go to school? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of children 4 yrs. or younger [list by age]  
Currently in pre-school or daycare? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What type of school would you like to see developed at St. Madeleine Sophie?  
(Rank in order of preference.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (P)K-5 Elementary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (P)K-8 Extended Elementary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ K-8  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 6-8 Middle School  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other possibility you think should be considered \_\_\_\_\_
8. Operational costs are expected to be @ \$7,000 per student per year. What percentage of that do you feel should come from tuition? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Keeping in mind your preference stated in #7, if St. Madeleine Sophie were to open with grades at their levels (in 3-4 years) how likely would you be to send your children there for school?

	Definite No				Definite Yes
Grades 6-7-8	1	2	3	4	5
Grades 3-4-5	1	2	3	4	5

Grades 1-2	1	2	3	4	5
Kindergarten	1	2	3	4	5
Pre School	1	2	3	4	5

10. If response was “1” or “2” to any of the above, please comment on the reasons:
- 
- 
11. How would getting your child(ren) to and from St. Madeleine Sophie compare with getting them to and from their current (or the nearest public) school?
- a) SMS more difficult\_\_ About the same\_\_ SMS easier\_\_
12. What are your thoughts about the *draft* MISSION STATEMENT?
13. What are your thoughts on the *draft* ADMISSIONS POLICY?
14. What are your thoughts on the *draft* CURRICULUM?
15. What are your thoughts on the *draft* STAFFING?
16. What are your thoughts on the *draft* GOVERNANCE?
17. What 1 or 2 things do you find most attractive or desirable about the Model for a possible SMS School?
18. What 1 or 2 things would cause you to hesitate?
19. Any other questions, concerns, comments you would like to bring up?

# St. Madeleine Sophie Parish, Bellevue

## Report on the “Numbers” from the Interview with Parents of Young Children: A Brief Summary of Findings

Mary Beth Celio  
Office of Planning and Research  
Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle  
July 29, 2002

### Respondents

- There were 199 interviews completed with parents who have children birth-10 living at home with them in St. Madeleine Sophie Parish. There are 389 children living in these households. It is estimated (using the logic presented below) that this constitutes approximately half of the households/children in the parish who might be of an age to attend a parish school beginning in 2003. It is clear that not all eligible parishioners were contacted, but a majority did participate.<sup>1</sup>

Children in response

#### *Rationale for response rate estimate:*

- ✓ In the past ten years, 686 infants have been baptized at St. Madeleine Sophie Parish. The children in responding families comprise approximately 57% of the total.
- ✓ In 2000-01, there were approximately 340 children from ages 4 through 10 enrolled in religious education programs in the parish. This is somewhat more than half of the children baptized in the relevant years. A total of 203 children live in homes interviewed

ding households are fairly well distributed across the age ranges. The table below displays the number of children baptized in the relevant year(s) and the number of children in responding households.

Current age	Number baptized at St. MS	Number in respondent families	% covered in interviews
8 to 10	208	101	48.6%
5 to 7	185	130	70.3%
4	66	34	51.5%
3	67	38	56.7%
2	69	37	53.6%
1	91	32	35.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>56.7%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Because the purpose of this study was not to make statistical projections (that is, it is not being used to project future interest from the universe of parishioners but to assess existing interest from current parishioners), the response rate is not critical. It is enough to know that a majority of eligible families were given an opportunity to participate in the interviews.

## School type preference

- Almost three-fourths of the parents responding to the survey indicated that their first choice of type of school was either K-8 or (P)K-8 (Extended elementary). There are 288 children the households that ranked such a school in first place. When second place rankings are added to first, the pattern is the same: a clear preference for a K-8 or (P)K-8 school.

	Assigning any rank		Ranked first			Ranked second	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Kids in these families	Number	Percent
K-8	114	57.3%	76	38.2%	147	38	19.1%
(P)K-8 Extended elementary	93	46.7%	69	34.7%	141	24	12.1%
6-8 Middle School	33	16.6%	18	9.0%	31	15	7.5%
(P)K-5 Elementary	20	10.1%	10	5.0%	19	9	4.5%
K-12	9	4.5%	3	1.5%	10	6	3.0%
PreK	3	1.5%	2	1.0%	2	1	0.5%
K-5	2	1.0%	2	1.0%	2	0	0.0%

## Operational costs and tuition

- Only 78 of 199 families (39%) provided a specific response to the question about the percent of operational costs (expected to be about \$7,000 per student) that should come from tuition. Among this group, the average percent from tuition was 67%. The parents most likely to respond to the question were those who indicated that they would very likely or definitely send their children to a school at St. Madeleine Sophie. These parents indicated that, on average, 70% of the operational costs should be covered by tuition, while the average percentage was 65% for those who indicated they might send their children to the school. However, it should be noted that the single most common response to this question was: “use the percentage common in other Catholic schools.”

## Preference for grades at entry

- The likelihood of starting children at St. Madeleine Sophie School is closely related to the age groups of the children in question. In other words, if you have very young children and are definitely (give a “5” on the 5-point likelihood scale) or very likely (a “4”) to send your children to the school, you most likely want to start them at one of the early grades. If you have older children and are interested in sending your children, you would prefer starting in an older grade. There is clearly a preference for starting at a natural break point: Kindergarten/first grade or sixth (the beginning of middle school).

Family configurations	Preschool		Kindergarten		Grades 1-2		Grades 3-5		Grades 6-8	
	Definite / Very likely		Definite / Very likely		Definite / Very likely		Definite / Very likely		Definite / Very likely	
	(4,5)	Maybe (3)	(4,5)	Maybe (3)	(4,5)	Maybe (3)	(4,5)	Maybe (3)	(4,5)	Maybe (3)
Only children < 4	12	13	21	13	26	14	0	3	0	0
Only children 5-7	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	7	2	0
Only children 8-10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5
Children birth-7	3	1	15	6	22	18	23	28	5	2
Children <4 and 8-10	1	0	0	3	2	6	0	0	9	6
Children 5-10	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	6	10	19
Children at all levels	3	3	12	5	13	5	19	11	28	15
<b>Total</b>	19	17	48	27	64	43	62	55	58	47

## Overall likelihood of attending a school at St. Madeleine Sophie

- in order to look at the overall likelihood of a family/children attending a school at St. Madeleine Sophie Parish, the responses of parents to the likelihood question (“Keeping in mind your preferences for [grade levels], how likely would you be to send your children. . .?”) were categorized as “highly likely” (given a 4 or a 5), “maybe” (3) or “unlikely” (0,1,2). A total of 140 families with 281 children said that they were either highly likely or would potentially send their children to the school. Many of these children are still young (131 are 4 or younger), but a substantial number are also in the 5-7 age range.

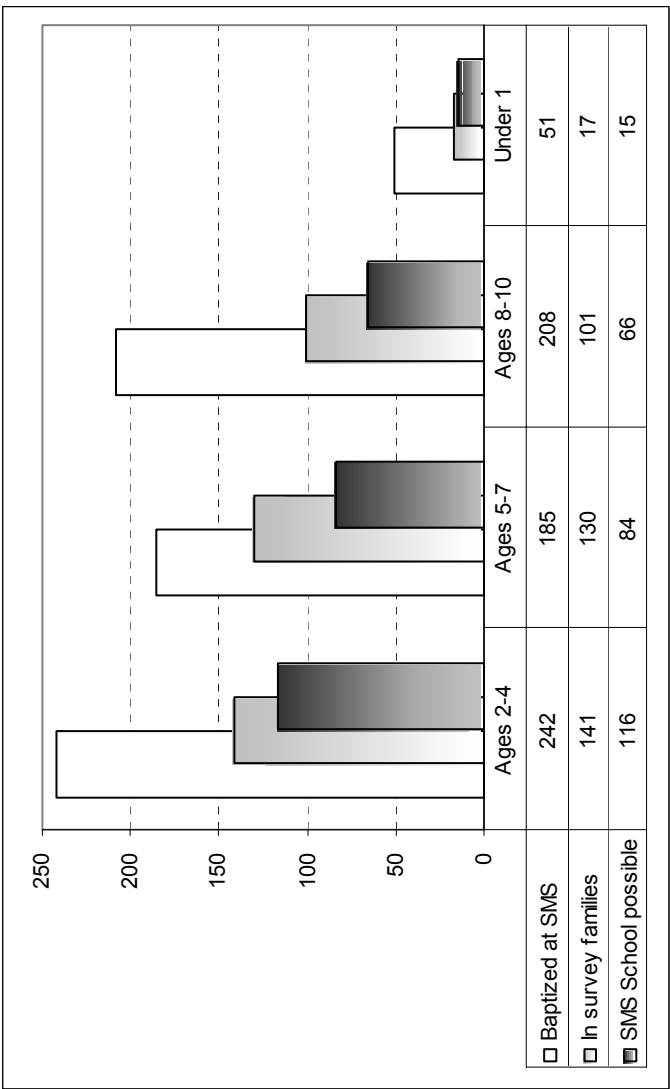
Likelihood of sending children	Families	Total kids	Kids < 1	Kids 2-4	Kids 5-7	Kids 8-10
Highly likely (4,5)	89	176	11	74	53	38
Maybe (3)	51	105	4	42	31	28
<b>Total possibles</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>66</b>
Unlikely (0,1,2)	59	108	2	25	46	35

## **Summary**

The response to the interviews was more than adequate to capture a picture of the level of interest in a school from among those most likely to be interested in such a school: those registered at St. Madeleine Sophie Parish, who have had their children baptized in the parish, and who send them to the Faith Formation program. It is estimated that slightly more than half of the eligible parents were reached, but the responses give a good picture of the existing interest. Although it is possible to estimate that other parents not reached may have similar attitudes, it is not rely on such estimations for decision-making.

Interest in a school at St. Madeleine Sophie among parents with potential students is substantial: most of those who have children of the relevant ages are either likely to send their children or would consider it. Although some parents have reservations about a “start-up” school and/or are very happy with the public schools in their area, many others indicate that the value of a complete Catholic education within the Catholic culture is of great interest to them.

The graph below summarizes the respondent pool and the school interest discerned in this survey process.



**Report to the Interviews Committee**  
**School Task Force**  
**St. Madeleine Sophie Parish**  
July 2002

This report is based on slightly over 200 interview contacts with parents of school-age children. It is not meant to summarize all comments and perspectives, but to highlight certain areas of support or concern that drew the attention of many respondents.

## **SUPPORT FOR A PARISH SCHOOL**

The great majority of families interviewed showed support for a school to be developed at St. Madeleine Sophie Parish (SMS.) Beneath this seemingly united sentiment, however, lies a variety of strong concerns, expectations, conditions and hesitations that require some attention and definition before the proposal is put before the community as a whole. Those families that do not support going ahead should not be ignored: Their opinion is strong, and their reasoning may well resonate with older parish families whose children have already passed through their school years using the public school system.

## **CATHOLIC**

Not surprisingly, the most cited value of a parish school was its Catholic faith environment—not only religious education/faith formation as curriculum, but an atmosphere in which faith-based values and morals are part of school-community life, influencing relationships and behaviors; where prayer is regarded as normal and good, God is openly honored and included as part of “how life works,” and religious feasts can be celebrated as more than days off from school. Parents also believe that a school will help build a sense of community amongst themselves as parishioners as well as amongst their kids as peers who are Catholic.

Concern: Parents whose children might not enroll are most anxious that the Faith Formation and/or Youth programs will be diminished; that they and their kids will be regarded as “lessers’ in the parish or become as foreigners if the whole focus and energy of the parish gets centered on the school.

Other expectations attach to the aura of “Catholic:” Parents believe that their children will be exposed to a more select group of peers; that discipline will be stronger (than in public schools;) and that a parish school is a safer place for their kids to spend the day.

Of particular note, many parents are quite satisfied with the local public schools through grade five. They would send their kids to a parish school for the middle school years (grades 6-7-8) because a Catholic environment would then be important as a

bulwark against the various temptations, diversions and moral challenges of these early teen years. They expect that a parish school would provide an inherent screening of their children's primary social contacts.

The Task Force may want to pay special heed to the sentiment that good public schools, supplemented by a good Faith Formation Program, will work just fine. Further, it is likely that most all parishioners will need assurance that existing programs and ministries will not be diminished – or possibly even devoured – by the institution of a school.

## **COSTS/FINANCES**

Of nearly universal concern is the matter of costs, not only for families to come up with tuition, but for the parish as a whole -- already stressed by the capital campaign -- to build and pledge to perpetually underwrite a school whose annual operating costs will continue to rise. Is this pushing too far too fast?

Respondents were, by design, younger families with children aged 10 years and under. They feel they are not yet established, attempting to stabilize their finances around mortgages and other obligations. Only a handful said they could readily pay a tuition that would equal the estimated per-student operating cost (\$7,000 per year.) Many felt that 50-60% of that amount would be an appropriate level for tuition, but also indicated that this would be a challenge for their family especially if they had more than one child in attendance.

The question stood out: If most families estimate they would need to be subsidized, who is going to pay the bills? For their own sakes and for the parish, they would like to see a clear financial plan laid out that projects both capital investment and cost to the parish to subsidize a school. The Model's section on "Finances" seemed idealized, glossing over the hard facts of taking on debt. Before plunging ahead (as a parish) they would want to know that there is indeed a plan with real numbers and real sources of revenue.

Opportunities to volunteer were strongly supported as means of reducing both operational costs and tuition obligations. For many families, a decision about enrollment might be tied to articulation of a rate structure/policy that includes discounts for multiple children, allows parents to "work off" part of their tuition, and provides a means for at least some of their money to be counted as "charitable contribution" (rather than "tuition") in order to be tax deductible.

More than a few respondents oriented themselves primarily as consumers, indicating that they would pay "private school rates" only if the quality of education clearly surpassed that of the best public schools. That is, in their minds, simply being Catholic is not enough to warrant such a big investment. Many of these felt they would be unlikely to send their kids during a start-up phase, preferring to wait until the bugs are worked out and the school can prove itself.

It was typical for parents to urge that plenty of allowance be made (in the operating budget) to do whatever it takes to attract and retain the very best educators from the very beginning. While the sentiment of avid school-supporters was, “The sooner the better,” the common nugget of advice amongst all respondents was, “Don’t start out shaky.” Take the time to develop a quality program before opening. In general there was support for starting with only a few grades, and adding on according to need. As noted above, there is some support for opening with classes at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level (adding 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in subsequent years) when parents would be prepared to switch their kids out of the public system.

There is a belief that “families with money” have gone elsewhere to get their kids into a Catholic school; and a corresponding concern that those left behind might not be able to keep a school going. To successfully recommend that SMS open a school, the Task Force/Parish Council will need to state very convincingly just what it is that makes them believe this is not only desirable, but doable.

## **CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS, SUPPLEMENTS**

Virtually all parents emphasized a strong focus on “the basics,” but also want to know that modern resources like science and technology labs and a functional in-school library are part of the plan. For many, an organized sports program (not just P.E.) would be key in their decision, followed by both staff and facilities to accommodate art, music and/or theater opportunities. Those who seek a foreign language option prefer that it be offered at the earliest grade levels.

Most felt satisfied with the Model as a preliminary sample, but their enrollment decisions would be pending more detail and more assurance that the unique needs of their children will be addressed. Assuming that a parish school would be relatively small (and thus limited in capabilities) compared to public schools, they want to know that an advanced learner will get appropriate class work and support; that an average student won’t be threatened by the proposed pursuit of excellence; that a slower child will not get left behind. It was also widely encouraged that the Model’s vision be extended beyond “high school preparation” to being foundational for life-long learning.

### Option for Special Education

Nearly everyone who commented on this offering supported the *idea* of a parish school making caring provision for children with special needs. However they voiced concern that the proposal (as represented in the Model) does not show awareness of the resources that would need to be committed, from specialists trained in assessments and methods to specially designed environments and materials. Parents of kids with special needs expressed uncertainty about leaving public school programs that are working well for them and have federal/state/district resources behind them.

### Preschool and Daycare

Very few respondents saw a need for the parish to offer daycare. Though it might be a convenience for some (from time to time) they would not sacrifice school space for it, and feel there are sufficient alternative providers in the area.

Provision for Preschool was much more attractive, and many families said they would be likely to use it if one were opened. It was also viewed as a good “prep” for entry into an SMS Kindergarten. But even here most parents said a Preschool would need to be self-supporting (not parish subsidized) and should not take up space or resources that could be needed for classes. Their advice was to work on getting a school going, and add Preschool later if there is demand and sufficient space. Parents who would not likely make avail of a Preschool want assurance that those who do will not have an “edge” over them when competing for admission to the school.

Before- and After-school care received nearly universal support. For some families, its availability would be a deciding factor.

## **MISSION AND VISION**

Parents responded very favorably to emphases on community, personal responsibility, orientation to service, world awareness, and diversity that is both taught and experienced in the school. (Some did express the feeling that the admissions process itself would reduce the likelihood of achieving significant diversity in enrollment, especially in terms of social and economic – and religious – background.)

They advise, however, that if the Model they received is to be made into an actual proposal, its language should be less “flowery,” phrasing that reads like jargon should be eliminated, and details of the real educational and financial plans should be fleshed out.

## **APPENDICES**

**A. PARISH GOALS REGARDING A SCHOOL MINISTRY**

**B. TASK FORCE ORGANIZATION AND ROSTER**

## APPENDIX - B

### ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE SCHOOL FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE - ORGANIZATION

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Loretta Wright, Assistant to Pastor

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Trish David  
Steve Derus, Pastoral Council Liaison  
Marilyn Geiger, OSF  
Sharon Glenn  
Janet Kelly, Faith Formation Task Force Liaison  
Bruce Laing, Chair  
Jim McGinley  
Ginny Morrissey  
Gene Vanderzanden, Parish Staff and Building Task Force Liaison

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##### Guiding Statements

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## **ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE SCHOOL FEASIBILITY TASK FORCE - ROSTER**

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