



**STEERING COMMITTEE  
STATEMENT OF CONSENSUS  
SUBMITTED 11-27-24**

The steering committee, comprised of community members representing Peru Catholic School, Trinity Catholic Academy, and Holy Family School, having done the following:

- reviewed external trends in society and the community that are impacting Catholic schools, such as changing demographics, increased competition, declining enrollment, staffing issues, and expanded needs and expectations that strain existing resources;
- evaluated the financial status of the schools, including budgets, funding sources, parish assessments, and the potential cost saving from unification;
- assessed the sustainability and suitability of existing school buildings, as provided in the study completed by Farnsworth Architects;
- examined stakeholder feedback from current and CCD parents/families, teachers, parish members, business leaders, and education commission members; and
- conducted open discussions and deliberations to envision possible school models

has reached consensus and proposes the following path forward to energize Catholic school education in the Illinois Valley:

**The formation of a school model that unifies Peru Catholic School, Trinity Catholic Academy, and Holy Family School into one system with a new name, identity, and governance structure in new or improved facilities**

To enhance the preK-8 Catholic school experience and provide families with an exceptional choice for their children's academic education and faith formation, the committee has concluded that a new facility is essential to providing a vibrant and sustainable Catholic education in the Illinois Valley area. Based on this conclusion, the committee makes these recommendations:

- Explore the feasibility of a new school building; identify and evaluate alternative sites that take geography/population data and transportation impact into consideration
- Develop an interim/transition plan for moving together to become one school that:
  - Results in cost savings that will be dedicated to the unification process and improvement of facilities
  - Leads to economies of scale
  - Achieves a retention rate of 85%
  - Supports additional academics, extracurriculars, and student services
  - Considers transportation impact

This proposal is predicated on the committee's understanding that finances of all three schools will be combined as part of this unification process. As such, all current assets should be retained and used for creation of the new unified school system.

The committee acknowledges that after this recommendation is endorsed by leadership, the Consortium will identify subcommittees, such as finance, governance, curriculum, personnel, facilities, extracurriculars, and marketing/public relations, to advance implementation of the decision made by leadership based on this proposal.

The committee also acknowledges and agrees that some unification and/or the announcement of a new unified school system may potentially occur in early 2025, with the goal of a new school model being in place for the 2025-26 school year.

Thank you for choosing to form this committee and for providing us the necessary time, information, and supportive resources. This allowed the committee to have a deeper understanding of the current realities, conduct open, collaborative discussions, and reach the consensus and recommendations we have presented in this proposal. We are excited for the future of Catholic school education in the Illinois Valley, and we look forward to your response.

Respectfully submitted,

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