



State of the School 2019-2020

Divine Mercy Catholic School

Vision of Hope

The 2019-2020 school year was one for the record books. No one could have prepared us for the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic quarantine and school shut down. It tested our fortitude and challenged staff to think on their feet. So what did it teach us?

It taught us that we are capable of dealing with challenge. We are creative and adaptable.

We put our students first and work to serve our community the best we can through any crisis. We are people who focus on what can be done. We are people of hope.

The staff at Divine Mercy Catholic School pivoted to emergency distant learning in three school days. We developed a food program for families who needed support and managed

childcare for essential workers. We delivered supplies, technology devices, academic support programming, counseling services, and had a bit of fun in the process.

We learned a lot through this experience and concluded along with the rest of the country that face to face education is best for elementary students. We grew through the challenges we faced together. We are stronger

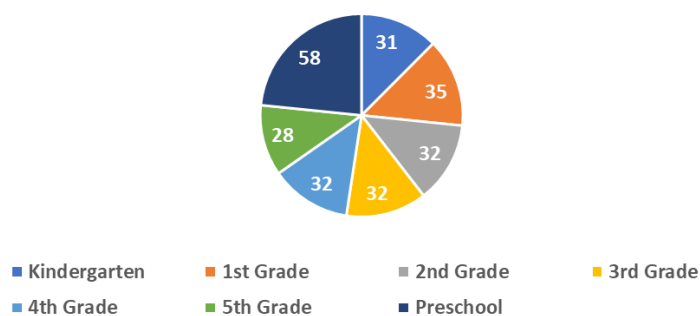
today than we were just a few months ago.

It was fortuitous that the theme for our scholarship gala this year was Visions of Hope. It has become the theme for our future planning and an anthem to our souls. Catholic Education has been alive and well in Faribault for over 155 years. It will continue to be a light for the people here for many years to come. Hope lights our way forward.

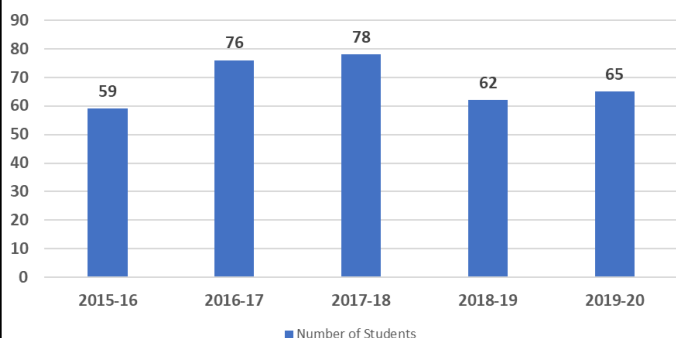
Enrollment Data

The graphs show historical enrollment data for our elementary and preschool programs along with projected enrollment for the 2020-21 school year. Over the last two years, we have seen a drop in enrollment. In the preschool, this reflects a change in programming and the drop from 4 classrooms to 3. The primary reasons that have been given in the primary school over the past three years are cost of programming (inability to pay tuition) and location (families moving out of our community). We continue to work to meet the needs of families through financial aid and address the issues leading to the drop in enrollment.

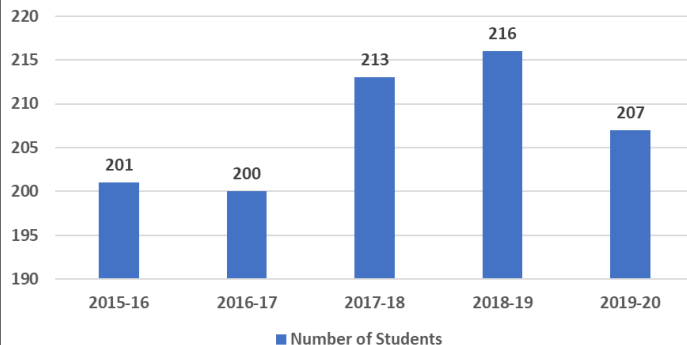
Projected Enrollment 2020-21
Total Number= 248 Students



Historical Preschool Last Five Years



Historical Enrollment K-5 Last Five Years





Financial Report

Financial concerns remain a challenge at Divine Mercy Catholic School. While we continue to work to provide equitable salaries for our staff, that desire is balanced by the need to provide quality education at an affordable price for our families. In the 2019-2020 school year 68% of our registered students received financial aid to attend. This means, according to an independent analysis provided through TADS, these students and their families could not afford the annual tuition of \$3430 per student. The 2020-2021 school year is looking to be an even

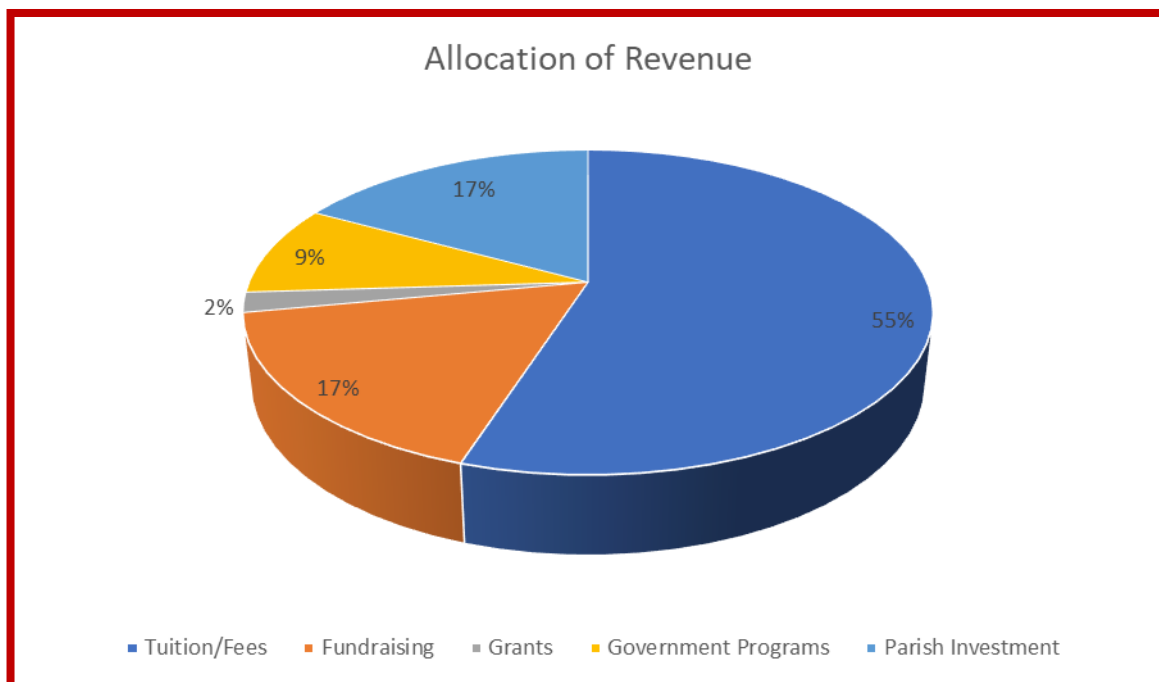
bigger challenge given the economic impacts to families of the Covid -19 pandemic.

In 2020-2021, the annual cost to educate a child at Divine Mercy Catholic School will reach \$6,496.84. Through the generosity and sacrificial giving of our church and Catholic community, we are blessed to be able to again offer this education with tuition set at \$3430.00 per child and fees of \$150.00.

Our annual budget is made up of five distinct revenue streams. (see

chart below) Tuition covers just 55% of our total annual expenditures of just over 1.5 million. Our parish's investment in the school and fundraising dollars including Spooktacular, our annual fund drive, and the Scholarship gala both cover 17% each. Government funding through the title and hot lunch program covers 9% of costs and grants and bequests cover around 2% annually.

We will continue to work to meet the needs of our families. We remain grateful for the support of our strong community.



Strategic Initiatives

Divine Mercy Catholic School continues advancing our mission through the strategic plan. This plan is developed in coordination with our accreditation through the Minnesota Non-Public School Accrediting Association (MNSAA). Divine Mercy completed our accreditation cycle in the spring of 2019. This year we have made progress on the following strategic initiatives.

Objective 1

DMCS will meet the needs of each student

Strategy 1

Explore, evaluate, and implement educational opportunities that meet the needs of diverse learners

Through our analysis of NWEA results, we have identified STEM, Language Arts, and Math enrichment as areas of focus. This year we developed a STEM makerspace lab with funding provided through a grant from the Catholic Schools' Center of Excellence (CSCOE). We also provided a training for all staff on how to effectively provide enrichment in the regular classroom. Through this training, we test-ran some materials to be used in this directive. In an effort to better track and serve the individual needs of our students, we formed a Student Support Team (SST). This group of dedicated and experienced people developed a process for teachers to document and get feedback on student needs and how best to serve each student. Forms, timeline and a process for this were developed and initiated.

Strategy 3

Integrate technology use throughout curricular areas to support student learning.

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, funding streams for technology have been dedicated on a three-year rotational strategy that will provide for adequate replacement of student devices. Our focus is on purchasing adequate numbers of student devices in the lower elementary and upgrading the devices in 4th and 5th grade. Ongoing technology training sponsored by CSCOE for instructional staff is occurring this summer on Google, SeeSaw, and other distance learning platforms through the Tierney company.

Objective 2

DMCS will provide a safe and nurturing learning environment

Strategy 1

Ensure security for the safety of all staff and students.

A full analysis of the current school building was completed prior to sending out the Capital Campaign survey. All items needing work have been listed and evaluated. Most were put on hold due to the capital campaign, however the list is being looked at again to determine needs based on the postponement of the capital campaign.

Strategy 2

Address future facility needs

Although the decision to move ahead with the capital campaign has been made, the timeline has been paused due to the Covid-19

shutdown. The time line will be reassessed when the crisis is past.

Objective 3

Ensure DMCS sustainability in the future

Strategy 1

Seek opportunities to engage and connect families within our school community.

PTO addressed this during the 2019-2020 school year, however, they did not get a chance to put their plans into action due to the Covid-19 shutdown. The time line has been adjusted to reflect this and this will be a focus again for next school year in the hope that we will be able to put the plan into action.

Strategy 4

Expand collaboration with Bethlehem Academy to ensure inclusive PreK through 12 Catholic Education in Faribault.

A combined Enrollment Task Force with BA was formed this fall and an initial meeting was held. Due to illness and medical leave of administrative presence at BA, this task force did not get off the ground. New administration is set to start July 1. We will revisit this and continue the conversation next school year.

As the 2020-2021 school year begins, we will refocus our energies on the strategic directions laid out in our plan. Continued efforts on enrichment, Social/Emotional Learning, coordination with our partners at Bethlehem Academy, and a capital campaign to address a new school building will be our focus. As always DMCS strives to continue to grow and improve.

Divine Mercy Catholic School

15 3rd Ave SW
Faribault, MN 55021

Phone: 507-334-7706
Email: info@dmcs.cc



**Illuminating Minds,
Cultivating Faith**

Divine Mercy Catholic School:

A community, grounded in
faith, dedicated to the
development of the whole
child mind, body, and soul.

***At Divine Mercy, our goal is to
provide every one of our students
with an educational experience
that establishes a firm foundation
of academic excellence and a rich
spiritual journey that focuses on
the faith and values of the Catholic
Church. It is with this foundation
that our students excel at the
middle and high school level.***

