



September 16, 2016

Dear Parents,

In consultation with the Archdiocesan Board of Catholic Education and the leadership of the school, I accept the recommendation to close John F. Kennedy Catholic High School at the end of the 2016 – 2017 school year. Following deliberations with the Archdiocesan Board of Catholic Education and the School Oversight Committee, and in spite of the efforts of many to improve enrollment and reduce the increases in the cost of education, this will be the final academic year for the school.

I have asked Dr. Kurt Nelson, Superintendent of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of St. Louis, to contact the presidents of the other 26 Catholic high schools in the archdiocese. He will ask them to be prepared to consider and welcome students from Kennedy Catholic. I have asked Fr. Richard Wosman, president of Kennedy Catholic High School, and the Archdiocesan Catholic Education Office to ensure the following:

- All existing scholarship grants and tuition arrangements will be honored at any of the schools owned and operated by the Archdiocese of St. Louis (Bishop DuBourg, Cardinal Ritter, Duchesne, Rosati-Kain, St. Dominic, St. Francis Borgia, St. Mary's, St. Pius X and Trinity).
- Every Kennedy student seeking a Catholic education will receive a special \$500 transition credit to cover student fees at the archdiocesan-owned Catholic high school to which he or she has been accepted.
- Kennedy High School will host an evening for our families to meet with representatives of all of the Catholic high schools in the archdiocese this fall to assist with placement for each student.
- Each student will have a personal advocate and advisor while seeking enrollment in a new school.

In the days ahead, there will be informational meetings at the school where you may learn more about the closing and our next steps. Throughout this school year, the many friends, alumni and benefactors of Kennedy Catholic will be recognized and honored along with the faculty and staff as we celebrate nearly 50 years of Kennedy Catholic High School.

In recent years, there has been a diminishing number of Catholic families in this area of the archdiocese seeking a Catholic high school education for their children. Kennedy High School's freshman enrollment has dropped by 50% in two years. Total enrollment is down 43% since 2013. I am hopeful that the generosity of so many people to our campaign for Catholic education will be part of the answer to our prayers for vibrant, growing and financially healthy schools.

There are more than 6,000 Kennedy Catholic alumni who influence our community every day with their diverse talents and Christian witness. I am sure you know some of them. Join me on this journey, sad though it is, thanking God for His blessings on the Kennedy Catholic community over the past five decades.

In the coming days, Fr. Richard Wosman will be meeting with students and parents. If you have specific questions, you may contact Fr. Wosman directly at rwosman@kennedycatholic.net or call 636-628-1932.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Carlson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson
Archbishop of St. Louis