



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO

DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

ONE PETER YORKE WAY, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109-6602 (415) 614-5660 FAX (415) 614-5664

Dear St. Elizabeth School Community,

February 24, 2010

During the past four years, St. Elizabeth Parish, the faculty, staff, administration, and parents along with the Archdiocese of San Francisco have worked to address the declining enrollment at St. Elizabeth School. Currently, the enrollment stands at 132 students. It is expected that the enrollment next school year will be less than 120 students.

During that same period of time, the cost of operating the school had exceeded the income from tuition, fees, fund raising efforts, parish contributions and Archdiocesan subsidies, tuition assistance and funds raised through the Alliance. Four years ago, St. Elizabeth School secured a zero interest loan from the Archdiocese for \$92,000 to meet the expenses (teachers' pension \$60,000/yr., medical insurance \$9,500/mo., property insurance \$11,000/yr., etc.) for FY 2006. During each of the past four years the expense of operating the school has outpaced the income, resulting in a growing debt for the St. Elizabeth Parish. The resources of the Parish and the Archdiocese to subsidize St. Elizabeth School have been exhausted.

The efforts of many over the past four years have not resulted in the changes hoped for or expected. We are at a point where the financial resources have been depleted. Since the fall of 2008 when the Task Force was initiated, numerous conversations among the Archbishop, the Alliance Consultative Board, Fr. Suan, Mrs. Dabdoub, and members of the St. Elizabeth School community and me have resulted in some difficult and painful decisions about the future of St. Elizabeth School. The decision is to close the school at the end of this school year.

In an effort to assist families and students in continuing their Catholic school education, we are offering parents the opportunity to register at other Catholic Schools next week Tuesday, March 2, 2010 in Cantwell Hall from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Principals from various schools within the Archdiocese will be in attendance and you will be able to meet them, discuss your needs for your students and register that afternoon for next year. Parents not able to come that evening will be able to go to the school of their choice to register their child after March 2nd. All students wishing to remain in a Catholic School for next year will be given this opportunity. Schools will make accommodations when and where possible. Student transfers during the remainder of this school year will not be accepted in any of our Catholic schools.

The closure of St. Elizabeth School is similar to the death of a loved one. The School and Parish Community will be in a state of mourning and grieving for many months. It is heartbreaking and sad; hard to comprehend and understand. Yet sixty years of educating students in our Catholic faith needs to be celebrated. I encourage you to do just that over the next few months.

I sincerely wish that things had been different, that we would have been able to turn the school around, but that has not happened.

Thank you for your dedication and concern for St. Elizabeth School over the past sixty years. We have many fond memories to share and hold dear in our hearts.

Sincerely yours,

Ms. Maureen Huntington, Superintendent of Catholic Schools