

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read through the 2021-2022 State of the School report for St. Mary's School, Bird Island. The purpose of this report is to inform all stakeholders and St. Mary's and the Heart of Jesus AFC about the important updates and events that have taken place over the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, it also serves to keep St. Mary's School up to date with MNSAA credentialing requirements.

You will find a variety of information in this document based on information on the school year we have just completed. A number of the items reference in this document are items from our school strategic plan.

These include efforts to increase enrollment, updating our curriculum, increasing the after-school program, providing ongoing professional development to teachers and ensuring our building is up to date for student to learn.

All of us at St. Mary's School, Bird Island feel proud and blessed to have this vocation serving children.

Thank you for all your ongoing support.



Accredited through MNSAA since 1988

Accreditations is a framework for the best possible educational program for learners. In addition to delivering recognized credibility of the quality of a school program in the eyes of stakeholders and the public, accreditation also offers outside objective validation that a school has met high standards and is actively seeking quality educational programs.



125th Anniversary Booklet and 2021-2022 State of the school Report

Mission Statement: St. Mary's School in Bird Island serves the area students in kindergarten through eighth grade by providing a Christ-centered Catholic education where academics, excellence, self-worth and faith development go hand in hand in a safe environment.

From the Principal



As we celebrate our 125th year, St. Mary's School stands on solid ground — a sturdy mission, a history of cultivating the gifts of students in service to the greater good, and a robust response to a global pandemic.

St. Mary's draws from its location, its history, its character, and a sense of limitless possibility. Put another way, St. Mary's School ensures it gives to the world the young citizens, scholars, and leaders it most needs.

Over the past number of years, we have gained new audiences, new students, and new traction. And now, with foresight, investment, and dedication, we will do more than offset these uncertain conditions; we will continue to thrive as a preeminent catholic school. We will build a school and a community worthy of the world's attention.

In the past few years, an infusion of new energy within our administration, faculty and stakeholders has helped give the school a renewed sense of pride and purpose. We've achieved remarkable success in admissions with more than 15% increase in the number of students attending St. Mary's since 2019. We've made major strides in fundraising. Our St. Mary's Fundraisers continue to outpace itself, setting record highs year after year.

Our response to the pandemic has won praise from our families and earned the respect of our peers. We opened our doors in late August 2020, and by the end of May, we had completed nearly 30 weeks of in-person learning. Our students experienced a vigorous program here at St. Mary's, attending classes in person during this unknown time.

In every corner of campus, students and faculty are working together in new ways, bringing fresh insight and inspiration to the community they create together.

As we continue to make St. Mary's School our top priority, we will be guided by these principles:

Equity: Our work will be rooted in our Episcopal values, honoring the humanity, dignity, and needs of all of our community members.

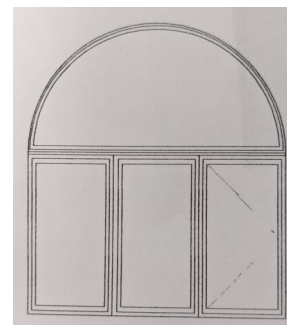
Excellence: We aspire to excellence in everything we do. We take pleasure and pride in collaborating with highly respected professional partners, and we expect first-rate results.

School Playground:

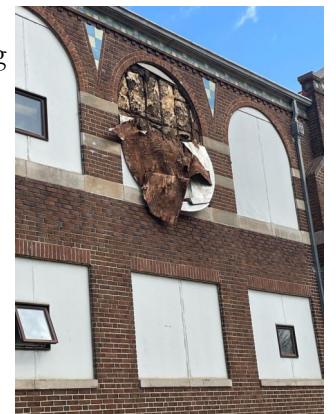
For a number of years, Catholic Mutual Insurance has told us to plan/save to make some required updates to our playground. Currently, the playground does not have an approved cushioning material underneath the equipment. Approved materials include: pea rock, wood chips, and rubber mulch. In addition, the swings need to be moved and or replaced. We are required to have two swing lengths of space in front of and behind the swings. Our leadership team and various committees are working to come up with a solution that not only addresses the current needs of the playground but the long range plan and vision for St. Mary's School. We have had a donor come forward and express interest in contributing toward this project. We would love to see this project completed before the 2023-2024 school year starts.

School Windows

Our long range facilities plan for St. Mary's School includes the replacement of school windows as one of the quickly approaching top priorities. This project wasn't intended to be included in this year's list (we were thinking in a year or two), but on Tuesday, April 5th, the wind did some damage to the school exterior which revealed a substantial amount of water damage and wood rot. The area is currently sealed to prevent further damage while we



explore our options for its proper repair/replacement. Our intentions are to bring back some the original school feel as we replace the windows. Included is a drawing of one option being considered. The projected cost to purchase and install one window is about \$5000.00. It is our intention to replace at least two or three windows yet this year, possibly more depending on our finances.



2021-2022 Education Committee Members:

Scott O'Neill, Matt Baumgartner, Jamie Kubesh, Sene Zupke, Malissa Everson, Jackie Kaufenberg, Steph Lerud

The Next 125 Years

We are putting all our faith in God and assuming that we will be here for yet another 125 years! While our long range planning doesn't go that far out, here is a quick peak at the next couple of years and some of the plans we have!

Strategic Plan Goals Achieved for 2021-2022:

- Develop a comprehensive and transparent school maintenance plan.
- Establish a 3-5 year plan for Marketing
- Form a plan that will allow staff to study data and reflect on effective teaching strategies
- Form a committee to reach out to families with children under the age of 5 on their child's baptism anniversary.

Strategic Plan Goals for 2022-23 school year:

- Develop and implement the strategies to an effective classroom and school-wide management structure.
- Incorporate a transparent coaching program to support the needs of the staff
- To ensure and update the Crisis Plan to ensure the safety of all students and staff.
- Continue to improve the quality, appearance and functionality of the school which includes cosmetic repairs to enrich its original character.

A Few Building Updates:

School Tuck-pointing:

Krause Konstruction will be on campus sometime over the summer to inspect and tuck-point the entire school. The brick/masonry will also be washed to clean the areas that have become dark. The cost of this project is \$19,460

Sustainability: Our construction and renovation projects will be shaped by a commitment to environmental sustainability.

Historic Restoration: We are committed to restoring and revitalizing our cherished and iconic campus.

Fiscal Responsibility: Our financial forecasts and decisions will be thoughtful, future-oriented, and value-driven.

This is our horizon. We set out for it — and we will reach it — together.

Tracy Sigurdson

St. Mary's School Principal

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Where it all began

The Start of St. Mary's School

In 1896, the Sisters of St. Joseph came to Bird Island to take care of a new school that was to be formed as part of St. Mary's Church. At this time, classes were conducted on the first floor of the parish house while the sister occupied the second floor as living quarters. Fr. Kober had built a new rectory where our present school playground is now. The first parish grade school for St. Mary's was built in 1898. It was a brick building that contained four classrooms and was used until 1933 when it was torn down.



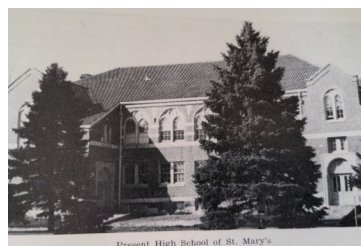
The New School Building



Fr. Scholzen became the priest at St. Mary's Parish in August 1910. He soon realized that the school building was inadequate due to the ever-increasing pupils. Funds* were collected for the new two-story school and it was built in 1913 with seven classrooms, a library, kitchen, and dining room. The school was solemnly blessed by his Grace, Archbishop John Ireland. *Cost to build the 1913 building was \$30,000. In 2022 this would be valued at \$875,000!

St. Mary's High School

It was deemed necessary to build a high school system for St. Mary's School. The High School was built in 1915 and Reverend Henry J. Minea was St. Mary's first assistant pastor who led and organized the high school system. It developed into one of the leading Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese with students coming from various parts of Minnesota to St. Mary's School. The school was conducted by the sisters of St. Joseph with the direction and supervision of the pastor and assistant pastor of the parish. Father Minea stayed at St. Mary's in Bird Island until 1920.



summer of 2020 all classrooms were cleaned out so social distancing requirement could be met and then spare items returned to the classrooms. In the picture to the left you can see how desks needed to be spaced to allow for social distancing. In addition, the main office moved from door one to door three which the majority of our foot traffic came in and out.

Second Floor Hardwood Flooring Restoration—2021

In 2021 the old carpet was removed from all classrooms and the library. The classroom floors had the original hardwood floors and were in good enough condition to be restored. A company came in and sanded the floor boards down, pieced in some new boards where needed since the Science Lab table was removed, stained and sealed all the classroom floors. The results were amazing! The library had new carpet tiles installed which also turned out wonderfully.



Peaceful Playground Games—2022

At the beginning of June and the end of the school year the school teachers and staff came together and installed a program called peaceful playgrounds on the parking lot area surrounding the playground. They spent several hours stenciling and painting a variety of educational games that can be used outside and during recess to promote organized fun! They did a wonderful job and students will get to enjoy it all this fall!



A Facility to Make it Happen

The current school building was constructed in 1915 making it 107 years young! In order to keep our facility functioning it requires a proactive and preventative maintenance approach. Thanks to the efforts of our maintenance team which includes parish and school administration, facilities staff and the St. Mary's Maintenance committee we have been able to tackle many facility updates over the past few years to keep our campus safe, functional, and beautiful. None of these projects would have been possible if it wasn't for the numerous and generous donors and alumni of the school. We are so blessed to receive these gifts and we hope you can see that we put your dollars to the best uses. Here are a few of the projects completed in the past few years.

New Hallway Floors on the Main Floor 2017

In 2017, the hallway tiles which were starting to pop off the floor were abated (because they contained asbestos) and replaced with new tiles. The replacing for the floor tiles was the start of choosing a color theme for the school that would run throughout the school. As rooms have been repainted over the last 5 years, we have tried to stick to this same color scheme, giving the school a cohesive and harmonious feel.

School Roof Replacement 2018

In 2018 the original clay tile roof from the school was removed and replaced with a steel roof in a color that was similar to the original clay tiles. The old roof had been leaking into the boys bathroom on the second floor for a couple of years. Planning for this project as well as fundraising started a year earlier. In the end over \$125,000 was raised for this project. Insurance funds were used to help complete renovations to the boys bathroom needed by water damage which was completed in 2019.



School Cleanout and Relocation of Main Office—2020

As COVID became the new norm it became clear that we would need to carefully select what items would be allowed back into classrooms to make cleaning and sanitizing a whole school on a daily basis realistic so in person learning would become a reality. Over the

Changing Times

The high school became affiliated with the University of Minnesota in 1927 and thrived for decades. The school mascot was the St. Mary's Marions and the colors were blue and yellow. In 1972, after 57 years of upper-level education, St. Mary's held its final high school graduation. Rising costs and declining student population made the continuation of St. Mary's High School unfeasible.

St. Mary's School Today

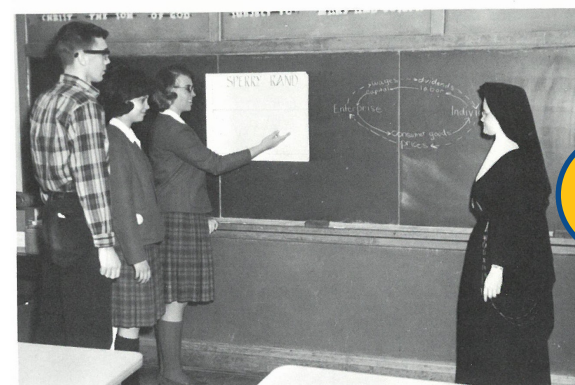
In 1995, an every-other-day kindergarten began, which expanded to every-day kindergarten in 2000. Today, St. Mary's School continues to make strides as a PreK-8 Catholic School offering a faith-based education and welcoming all followers of Christ at our school. St. Mary's School serves approximately 90 families and 145 students from Bird Island and Olivia, but also neighboring cities such as Redwood Falls, Willmar, and Sacred Heart.



Classroom Life...then vs now

Over the 125 years of St. Mary's School there may have been some minor changes in the classroom and how we teach. Just take a peek at some of these gems!

Boards: We have replaced the chalkboard with a SMART board. The SMART board has been installed in each classroom and is an integral part of our technology and educating our children.



VS



Computers: Back in the day, adding a computer lab to a school campus was a big deal. Computer classes were the start of students learning how to use technology. Today St. Mary's School boasts being one-to-one, which means it has one iPad for each of its students from Preschool through Eighth grade. Computer classes are a thing of the past as technology is integrated into all aspects of learning in today's classroom!



VS



Faculty and Staff: Nothing makes a bigger impact on the classroom environment or the student's education than the faculty and staff. We have been blessed with so many excellent teachers and employees over the 125 years of education St. Mary's has offered. If you see a teacher, be sure to thank them!

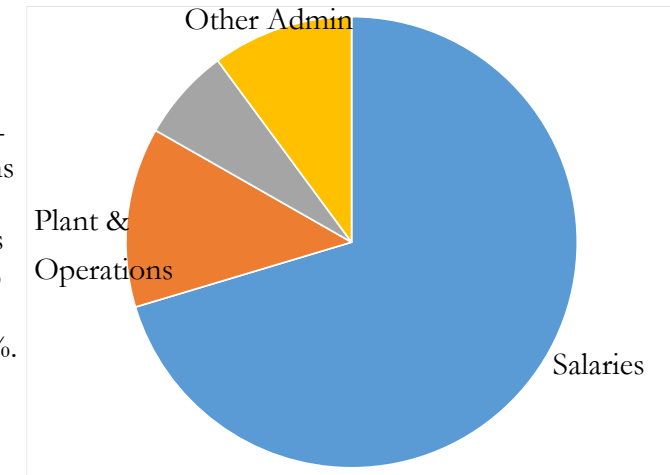


VS



Mr. Marshall Thorstad, Mr. Denis Wadley, Sister Patricia Kadelchek and Sister Sharon Fitzgerald enjoyed a break in the spring sun.

Expenses: In summary our biggest expense are salaries and benefits for school instruction and administration which accounts for 70% of the school annual expenses. Next Plant and Operations accounts for 13% of our school annual expenses. Other Administrative expenses makes up the next largest expense at 10% of our annual expenses and lastly school Instructional expense make up the last 7%.



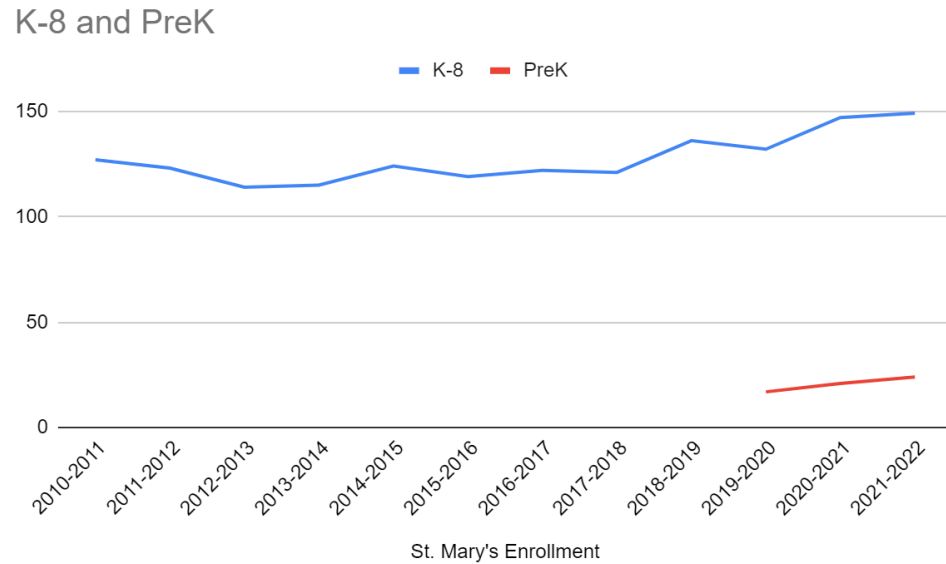
Average Cost to Educate a Student for 2021-2022 School Year

- St. Mary's: \$6,501
- NCEA: \$6,293
- District School: \$12,185

The average cost per pupil for public school is \$12,612.00 as reported by the NCEA. Catholic school save the US billions each year in education costs.

School Revenue	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Average
Tuition	\$288,545	\$337,931	\$364,700	\$382,220	\$449,550	\$364,589
Fundraising & Donations	\$405,082	\$249,103	\$262,503	\$261,213	\$286,473	\$292,875
Parish Subsidy	\$109,852	\$228,101	\$159,831	\$173,329	\$175,640	\$169,351
Other Parish Subsidy	\$19,044	\$19,050	\$14,350	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$16,489
Endowment	\$39,300	\$38,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$42,000	\$39,860
Total	\$861,823	\$872,185	\$841,384	\$871,762	\$968,663	\$883,163
School Expenses	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Average
Salaries	\$603,314	\$607,887	\$591,255	\$559,995	\$723,422	\$617,175
Plant & Operations	\$114,121	\$108,515	\$109,392	\$110,080	\$123,270	\$113,076
Instructional	\$75,953	\$53,836	\$59,586	\$56,305	\$45,438	\$58,224
Other Administrative	\$68,435	\$101,947	\$81,150	\$145,382	\$76,533	\$94,689
Total	\$861,823	\$872,185	\$841,384	\$871,762	\$968,663	\$883,163

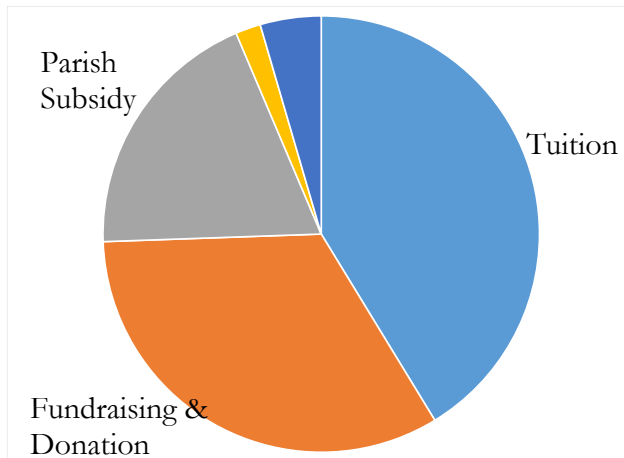
Enrollment Trends



Cost to Educate

The next couple of pages will illustrate the sources of income and expenses for St. Mary's School.

Revenue: In summary our main revenue source is the tuition we families pay making up 41% of the school's income followed by fundraising and donations which makes up about 33%. Next St. Mary's Church subsidizes the school which makes up about 19% of the school's annual revenue. 5% of the school annual income comes from its Endowment Fund and the remaining 2% from other parishes that subsidize the school.



Tuition Rate/Cost comparison for the 2021-2022 School Year

Average Annual Tuition: \$3,100
 Average Tuition Per Day: \$18.67
 NCEA Average Tuition: \$4,846

Students of Today

St. Mary's School's tagline is "Where Faith and Academics go hand-in-hand". In this next sections we will give you some data about how our students perform academically as well as how faith is lived out through our daily lives in school.

We Focus on Faith

Service and living out our faith is a reoccurring action in our school classrooms, in addition to weekly liturgies, prayer services, Stations of the Cross, Adoration and visits from the priest, students were prepared for the Sacraments of First Eucharist and Reconciliation and May Crowning. Here are a few highlights from this last year's service project!

The Marathon Fundraiser: Since 2018, we have taken this fantastic fundraiser and turned into a service project where we rake leaves, pick up sticks, and pull weeds for community members. It has been a huge success and lots of fun helping others. Students have a great time getting to know members of the community and coming closer in Christ by following his example of serving others.



Adopt a Family: This year, the families of St. Mary's school adopted 9 families from Renville County who were in need during the Christmas Season. Each class adopted a family and collected the needed items from the list provided by Renville Council Social Services. Items collected included baking pans, bed sheets, clothing, towels, as well as merry making items including dolls, stuffed animals, games, and other toys. Students found great joy in giving to others who are less fortunate.

Bags of Blessing: This year's 8th graders delivered the bags of blessing to Traditions in Olivia for Renville County's Walk in the Park program. These bags provide comfort to RC Hospital patients who are undergoing treatment such as chemotherapy. 47 bags were donated this year bringing the total number of bags given over the last 7 years to 353.



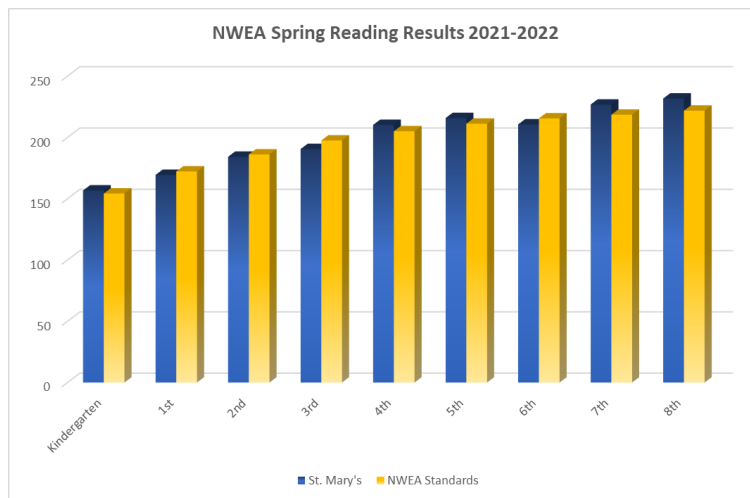
Kenya Connection: St. Mary's Students hold a couple of events that benefit missions in Kenya. First we had a penny war, where each class attempted to bring the most pennies in and raised \$2,557.21 which was used to purchase new books at the Lenkai Christian Academy in Kenya. The library is named St. Mary's Library! The second event was a bake good and keychain sale which raised \$1,423.10. These funds were used to purchase calves and billy goats for the Maasai tribe. The tribe will raise the animals and sell them for double their purchase price. Half of the money will go towards purchasing animals and the other half will go to feed the school children.



The Results Are In

Assessment Results: Below are the testing results for the 2021-2022 school year for St. Mary's and the local school districts. Two different assessments were used so a direct comparison of St. Mary's to the school districts is not possible but there is still a lot of interesting information.

In summary, the first three graphs show that St. Mary's consistently tests comparably to the national average of other schools using the NWEA assessment in all grade levels. The



fourth graph shows that the three school districts, which has all grades combined for each school, vary when compared to the state average scores for the assessment the districts use. It also shows that in 2021-2022 BOLD and RCW school districts tested lower than the Minnesota State Average. BLH however tested above state average for Math and Reading but below average for Science.

We are proud to show you what St. Mary's students accomplish academically and to tell you we accomplish this an impressive feat since in half the cost of what the school districts do! More information about the cost to educate at St. Mary's can be found on the next pages.

NWEA assessment and results were given to students in grades K-8. The following results are from spring testing. NWEA is designed to help teachers as they plan instructions for individual students. It also supports school staff and administration as they focus on allocating resources and it empowers staff as they work to improve all educational outcomes. All schools within the New Ulm Diocese have now implemented NWEA with the goal of have comparative data in the future. We were able to test all students in the Fall, Winter, and Spring sessions. The "Blue" bar represents the students of St. Mary's. The "Gold" bar represents the national norm from the schools who also tested in the same window.

