Better Together

“Developing Personal and Academic Excellence in the Catholic Tradition”

Rapid City Catholic School System

Annual Report 2018-2019
FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT:

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to provide you with this 2018-19 Annual Report of the Rapid City Catholic School System (RCCSS). The RCCSS maintains a system of internal controls and an external audit over financial reporting to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded and transactions are executed in accordance with school policy.

Thank you for your support of the RCCSS. Our school system continues to be blessed beyond measure. Your prayers and the dedication shown to our faculty, staff, students and families play such an important role in all we do and all that is accomplished. As you review this annual report, you will see how well our students continue to compete in all areas: academic, fine arts, and athletics. Furthermore, our students learn the importance of service. Our 6th-12th grade students typically have volunteer hours that total over 12,000 hours per year. They are certainly learning that “in giving we receive!”

Upon entering our facilities, you will read that “Christ is the reason for this school!” Our Catholic identity is strong with our first priority being to lead our students and one another into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ. Through weekly Mass and adoration, grade level retreats, lunchtime lectio divina groups, and daily prayer, Christ is at the center of all we do. We look to Him, the Master Teacher, to lead and inspire us in our vocation of Catholic education.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. Please continue to pray for the success of the RCCSS and that God’s will is being done. On behalf of our school community, thank you for your commitment to Catholic education.

Thanks be to God!

Barb Honeycutt
Superintendent

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

- Reviewing and approving the school system budget, tuition, and other sources of funding
- Determining policies that adhere to diocesan policy and enable the school to fulfill its mission
- Employing a superintendent and conducting an annual performance review
- Participating in the school’s development, student enrollment efforts, financial planning, facilities management, public relations plan, and long-range planning

2019-2020 MEETING DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
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<td>February</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June TBD</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All meeting times are at 5:00 p.m. on the 4th Monday of each month (except as noted) in the Cathedral Rectory basement meeting room.
BISHOP ROBERT GRUSS was born in Texarkana, AR, graduated from high school in Wisconsin, and worked as a pilot for ten years in Iowa before entering the seminary. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Davenport in 1994, having worked in various ministries over the past twenty-four years. He was installed as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Rapid City on July 28, 2011.

MICHAEL ALBERTSON and his wife, Kim, have two children: Megan, an STM alum, and Jason, an eighth grader at STM. Mike continues to donate a lot of time to volunteer organizations, especially those benefitting children's causes. Mike earned his B.S. in Civil Engineering from SDSU and his Master's degree from Iowa State.

TOM DURKIN will be entering his fourth year of service on the Board. He and his family have been blessed to be associated with the school system since 2000. Tom works at the SD School of Mines for the NASA Space Grant Consortium.

CHRISTOPHER GRANT has served on the RCCSS School Board for the past four years. After 27 years of service with the Rapid City Police Department, he became a national public safety consultant providing training, education and investigative services. Mr. Grant is also a School Safety Specialist and a member of the ALICE team, which is designed to enhance the security and protection of the students and staff of the Rapid City Catholic School System. Chris and Teresa have four children and seven grand-children, two of whom are students at St. Elizabeth Seton.

TERRI HILT has served on the school board for four years as a member of the Development Committee. Terri is married to Chad and has two sons who have been enrolled at RCCSS since preschool and are now at St. Thomas More High School. Terri currently works with her husband at Hilt Construction. She loves being a football mom and being on the lake at Angostura in the summer.

JEFF HURD is the immediate past-president of the Rapid City Catholic School System Board. He and his wife, Stephanie, have four children, and have been in the RCCSS since 1998. Their two youngest children currently attend St. Thomas More High School. Jeff practices law with the Bangs McCullen Law Firm.

MICHAEL JOHNSON is married to Debbie and together they have two children, Kayla and Dillon, both graduates of STM. Born and raised in Rapid City, Mike works in the construction industry. He has been an RCCSS Board Member since 2015 and is currently a member of Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

JEN KESZLER is married to Jason; mom to Sloane, Ryne and Rawley, all students at RCCSS. She is a registered nurse and originally from the Black Hills. An active member of Blessed Sacrament Church, Jen has served on the school board for two years.

FR. BRIAN CHRISTENSEN grew up on Long Island. After graduating from the US Air Force Academy in 1987, he served on active duty for nearly seven years. He entered seminary for the Diocese of Rapid City in 1994 and was ordained a priest on July 7, 1999. He has served as parochial vicar at the Cathedral, Chaplain of Catholic Schools, Chaplain of the Rapid City Newman Center, Director of the Office of Vocations, Vice Rector of the North American College, and as pastor of St John the Evangelist in Fort Pierre and as pastor of the parishes of Holy Cross (Timber Lake), St Mary’s (Isabel), and Holy Rosary (Trail City). He is currently serving as pastor of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Rapid City.

SUSAN SAFFORD has a Bachelor's Degree in Theology and Psychology from Creighton University, and a Master's Degree in Theology with a Specialization in Catechetics from Franciscan University. She has spent over 20 years in evangelization and catechetical ministry. She now serves as the Director of Pastoral Ministries & Faith Formation for the diocese. She is a consecrated virgin, and was consecrated in 2006.

LEANN WENGER has been on the school board for two years, currently serving on the Mission Committee. Her three sons: Jack, Brody and Kamdyn attend RCCSS. She works at the Rapid City Medical Center, LLP.

REV. EDWARD WITT, SCJ, is currently Pastor of St. Isaac Jogues, having served the Lord as an ordained Jesuit Priest for the past 27 years. Fr. Witt has also served faithfully on the School Board since 2015 and is beginning his third year as Treasurer.
ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS FROM ST. THOMAS MORE

FALL SEASON – 2018-19

FOOTBALL - Season 6-4  Head Coach Wayne Sullivan
   Black Hills Conference Champions (13th time in school history) & State -
   Class 11A Playoffs, All State Players – Jay Neugebauer, Grant Huber
VOLLEYBALL - Season 32-6  Head Coach Scott Benson
   Black Hills Conference Champions (5th time in school history), Appearance
   in the SoDak 16
CROSS COUNTRY - Head Coach Royce Wuertzer
   Runner-up for Combined Team Performance
   Boys CC Team Region State Meet 3rd Place. Girls CC Team Region State
   Meet 4th Place
BOYS GOLF - Head Coach Andy Shaw
GIRLS SOCCER - Season 2-7-3  Head Coach Doug Noyes
   All State Player Vivian Hurd
BOYS SOCCER - Season 9-4-1  Head Coach Pete Sales
   Final Four, All State Player – Michael Hurd, Spencer Lund, Sam Evans
GIRLS TENNIS - Head Coach Joanne Achbach
   STATE TOURNAMENT – 6TH PLACE
GIRLS COMPETITIVE DANCE - Head Coach Alexis Nowotny
   STATE TOURNAMENT – Class A-4TH PLACE

WINTER SEASON – 2018-19

BOYS BASKETBALL - Season 16-4  Head Coach Dave Hollenbeck
   Sweet 16 Winners Class A, State A Basketball 5th Place
   All Tournament Team: Ryder Kirsch and Ryan Wojcik
   All State Players: Ryder Kirsch and Caden Casey
GIRLS BASKETBALL - Season 15-5  Head Coach Brandon Kandolin
   Sweet 16 Winners Class A, State A Basketball 6th Place
   All Tournament Team Haleigh Timmer, All State Players 1st Team Haleigh
   Timmer
WRESTLING - Head Coach Nick Durham
   State Qualifier(s) Tyson Durham 113, Corten Dobesh 182
   BHC Champion Corten Dobesh-182. Region: Corten Dobesh 2nd Place,
   Tyson Durham 4th Place

SPRING SEASON – 2018-19

GIRLS TRACK & FIELD - Class A STATE CHAMPIONS – 5 PEAT
   Combined Girls/Boys State Champions Class A 7th in a Row
   State Champions: Kaci Cooper 400m - 57.50 & 800m - 2:22.33
   4 X 400 Relay Mary Dyke, Haleigh Timmer, Skylar Sullivan, Kaci Cooper
   4:07.31
   2nd Place: Haleigh Timmer 400m – 58.35, 800m – 2.22.76 4 X 200 Relay
   Madi Dietrich, Ciara Benson, Klaire Kirsch, Bailey Carlson 1:46.41
BOYS TRACK & FIELD - Class A STATE CHAMPIONS – Back to Back
   Jacob Hyde – Class A – Boys MVP
   State Champions: Jacob Hyde 100m – 10.90, 200m - 21.51 – Gold Medal
   Champion
   400m – 50.26, Jens Christensen Pole Vault – 14’ 6”
   4 X 200 Relay Corten Dobesh, Grant Huber, Matthew McGillick, Jacob
   Hyde 1:31.38 – 7th in a Row
   2nd Place: Grant Huber 300m Hurdles – 40.34, Jarek Glenn 800m – 2:03.49
   4 X 100 Relay Corten Dobesh, Grant Huber, Matthew McGillick, Michael
   Gylten 44.54, 4 X 400 Relay Corten Dobesh, Spencer Lund, Anson Wallace,
   Jarek Glenn - 3:31.89
BOYS TENNIS - State Tennis Tournament - 19th Place - One Class System
GIRLS GOLF - State Golf Tournament - 14th Place Team
Our 11th Annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation and Awards Dinner was celebrated on April 23rd. We celebrated 32 faculty and staff members who together total 370 years of service to the RCCSS.

The South Dakota Science State Selection Committee for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching selected Brenda Velasco, fourth grade teacher at St. Elizabeth Seton School, as a 2018 state-level finalist for K-6th grade teachers of Science. One finalist from each state was selected to win a trip to Washington DC and a $10,000 award from the National Science Foundation.

Carrie Wilson traveled with her husband, Wade, to Chicago to receive the Lead-Learn-Proclaim award from NCEA. Carrie was chosen from more than 150,000 teachers and administrators, as well as diocesan leaders and organizations dedicated to the nation’s Catholic schools. “Carrie desires that all students succeed academically in her classroom, never forgetting that they are unique individuals made in the image and likeness of God,” is just one comment from Mrs. Wilson’s nomination packet.

OUTSTANDING STAFF MEMBER
According to a student, our outstanding support staff member of the year, Dan Williams, “is a friend to both staff and students, making life much easier for everyone.” A colleague states that, “Modeling Christ-like behavior, Dan is one of the kindest, most genuine persons I have ever met. As a dedicated and committed employee, this person has raised the standard for all of us at the RCCSS.”

OUTSTANDING FACULTY MEMBER
A colleague and friend stated that “When entering the classroom of Tami Tremmel, you feel the love she has for the students and for God. God is first and the students know what it means to develop personal and academic excellence in the Catholic tradition, because it is modeled for them every single day by their teacher! Spending many nights and weekends in the classroom planning how to make learning fun and exciting, Tami’s great spirit and love of teaching creates students who are very enthusiastic about learning and students who love their school.” It was said that this kind and holy person goes above and beyond in all she does.
2018-2019 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Revenue

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<td>Tuition/Fees</td>
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<td>Financial Assistance</td>
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<td>Parish Support</td>
<td>$487,137</td>
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<td>Development</td>
<td>$1,377,710</td>
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<td>Other Revenue</td>
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<td><strong>$6,324,074</strong></td>
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Expenses

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<td>Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
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<td>Teaching Expenses</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Office / Administration</td>
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<td>Facilities</td>
<td>$553,188</td>
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<td>Extracurricular</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,615,138</strong></td>
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2018-2019 TUITION ASSISTANCE GIVEN: $813,282

- Donor Directed Tuition Assistance: $163,929
- Parish Support to Catholic Families: $487,137
- Employee Tuition Discount: $132,679
- Hardship Assistance: $1,107
- Donor Established Grants: $15,285
- SD Partner’s in Education Grants: $13,145
- **Total Tuition Assistance Provided:** $813,282

Cost Per Student Covered by Tuition

- **High School**: 85% Catholic, 67% Non-Catholic
- **Middle School**: 79% Catholic, 58% Non-Catholic
- **Elementary**: 72% Catholic, 50% Non-Catholic
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION ENDOWMENT

The endowment is dedicated to securing and enhancing the future of the School System. It provides permanent support for the mission of the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Compensation</th>
<th>$3,031,886</th>
<th>Western SD Catholic Foundation</th>
<th>$1,383,751</th>
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<td>Staff Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
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Endowment Funds include:

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<tr>
<th>Brady Trust Grant</th>
<th>E. Betty Bradsky Memorial</th>
<th>Memorial Garden</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donna Klapperich Fund</td>
<td>Bruce and Deanna Lien Foundation</td>
<td>Special Growth Accounts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duhamel Fund</td>
<td>Lola Leu Foundation</td>
<td>Notre Dame HS Charity</td>
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<td>Evans Native Am. Grant</td>
<td>Lori Thiel Simpson Grant</td>
<td>R&amp;E Native American College</td>
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<td>Fr. Peter Kovarik Grant</td>
<td>Msgr. William O’Connell Memorial</td>
<td>Ray and Michelle Novak Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Joe Butler</td>
<td>Wasserberger Memorial</td>
<td>Crazy Horse Scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Bachand Memorial</td>
<td>John Wade Memorial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam Mastrovich Grant</td>
<td>NFL Grant</td>
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Fundraising is necessary to close the gap between actual tuition and the cost to educate a child enrolled in the RCCSS.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>WHAT FUNDRAISING AT A GLANCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHAT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Fund</td>
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<td>Capital Campaign</td>
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<td>Grants &amp; Memorials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planned Giving</td>
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ANNUAL FUND (AUGUST - JUNE)
Your Annual Fund donation is the most important gift you give to the Rapid City Catholic Schools each year. In an effort to keep education affordable, the cost of tuition only accounts for about 80 percent of the actual cost of educating each student. In order to make up the difference, we rely on gifts from the entire school community including: current parents, alumni, parents of alumni, grandparents, faculty and staff, and other friends of the community. Money raised through the Annual Fund helps cover expenses above and beyond tuition, such as academic programming, salaries and benefits, student activities, faculty development, and technology upgrades. Your financial investment allows the Rapid City Catholic Schools to fulfill its mission of developing personal and academic excellence in the Catholic tradition.

Each year we set a monetary goal and a participation goal, which are both of equal importance. The monetary goal allows us to direct funds where the school needs it most. The participation goal sends a message to the greater community as to the amount of support the school receives. In this respect, you can clearly see that no matter the amount, all gifts matter.

PLANNED GIVING
Planned giving is another way to give a gift to the Rapid City Catholic Schools while meeting the long-term needs of your estate planning. Examples of planned gifts may include gifts of cash, securities, tangible property, real estate, or life insurance. Gifts may be made through bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, or charitable lead trusts.

The Men In Black
National Catholic Schools Week

Every year the National Catholic Educational Association hosts a week long celebration of Catholic education in America. For the past several years, the Mayor of Rapid City has supported the week with a “National Catholic Schools Week” proclamation.

We start the week long celebration with students speaking at all parish Masses, thanking parishioners for their continued support of Catholic education. The highlights of the week are the All System Mass, celebrated K-12 at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cathedral and the Men in Black Basketball game!

Students versus Faculty and STM seniors’ versus our priests! The Men in Black games have grown to be a favorite! Members of local parishes join the fun to cheer on their priest. In the past few years, Real Presence Radio has joined us to broadcast the games over the radio and on Facebook Live. The priests will sign player cards prior to the game. Fr. Mark McCormick, school Chaplin, was able to secure a donation of a St. Thomas More Icon and a St. Oscar Romero Icon created by Sister Mary Catherine.
THANK YOU TO THE 2018-2019 ANNUAL FUND SUPPORTERS

*Robert & Melissa Aberle
*Mark & Geri Aftanski
**Michael & Kimberly Albertson
MaryAnn & Gerald Apa
Leo A. Bakeberg
Barkley Ranch Inc.
James & Laura Barnett
*Steven & Jo Benn
Bill & Sandy Beshara
Leona Best
Paul J. Bettmeng
Jim & Maggie Bloom
Mike & Laura Blote
Doug Bodine
*Katelyn Bradford
*Mark Bruhn
Roy & Marilyn Brumbaugh
*John & Julie Carreiro
Robert Case
Mary Casey
Sean & Jami Casey, SMA ’83
*Tracie Cassidy, SMA ’87
Gerald Chrisman
Annabel Christensen
**Rev. Brian P. Christensen
*Dan & Carol Cooper
Lori & Jerry Cope
*Bob & Rebecca Cronin
Richard & Char Davis
Monte & Luanne Dirks
Ron & Jean Drummond
John & Carol Drury
Dan & Karrie Duffy
Bill & Kate Duhamel, Jr., SMA ’79
*Nick & Jennifer Durham
**Tom & Cathy Durkin
Eric & Dionne Eastmo
Stephen & Lynn Eckrich
Richard & Rachel Edelen
Beth & Burke Elers
Robertta Engesser
Angelina Enrique
Bruce & Shelly Evans
*Gary & Shellie Farwell
Donald & Suzanne Feist
Michael Figge
*Anthony & Tammy Flores
Greg & Connie Forstner
*Tracy & Bill Freidel
Tom & Pam Fritz
Dave & Beverly Gehman
Rev. Grant Gerlach
*Nate & Emily Gerlick
Madeline Giacolotto
James & Lisa Gibson
Dr. & Mrs. Giuseffi
Jeff & Kim Goble
Derek & Susanne Godsey
Michael P. Gogggin
Michelle Goodwin
Richard & Nancy Gowen
**Chris & Teresa Grant
*Susan & Earl Green
Matt & Jenny Greene
Douglas & Marilyn Grell
Stephen & Kristine Guillikson
Ron Guy
Tom Haney
Lisa & Leonard Hansen, STM ’98
*Steve & Cathy Hanson
Brett & Shawna Hanson
Joseph & Carol Harris, CHS
*Monte Hartl
Connie Haselhorst
Jeff & Susanne Haskell
Deacon Jim & Joyce Hayes
*Anita Hendricks
Jesse & Emily Herrera, STM ’05
** Chad & Terri Hilt
Joe & Bonnie Hilt
*Carolyn Hilton
*Elizabeth Hofer, STM ’07
Mike & Jane Holet
*Dave & Denise Hollenbeck
Mary C. Hollenbeck
Charles & Maxine Holm
*Bill & Barb Honeycutt
*Holly & Shadrach Howie
Sarah Huebner, STM ’12
**Jeff & Stephanie Hurd
Kamalynn S. Hurd
*Tom & Leanne Hurtel
Dirk Jablonski
Larry & Andrea James
Debbie Jennings
*Erin Jensen
Ronald Johnsen, CHS ’61
**Mike & Debbie Johnson
*Nicolas & Dee Dee Johnson
Stephanie Johnson
Father Dan Juefs
*Rob & Michelle Julian
*Brandon & Jonna Kandolin
Jafar & Jess Karim
Kurt & Lisa Katzenstein
*Jon & Ann Kellar, SMA ’80 & SMA ’84
Carter & Colleen Kerk
**Jen & Jason Kesler
Jim Kineen, CHS ’55
*Val & Vince King
*Lisa & Jim Kinyon, SMA ’84
*Trista Kirchesler
Karl & Shannon Kirsch
*Krysa Kjerstad
Jim & Laverne Klinefelter
Leo & Margaret Koenig
Francis Kolb
Don Koneche, CHS ’51
John & Geri Konen Kamp
Marge Kovaik
James & Diane Krebsbach
*Breanne & Tyler Kveene
Kelly & Suzanne Lambert
Walter & Robin Landry
Mary Ann Lane
*Colleen Lecy
*Natalie Lecy
Brad & Ann Lee
Duane Leier
Mike & Gina Lemon
*Maggie Liebetrout
James & Cora Lunan, SMA ’58
*Delaine & Michele Lutz
Kevin & Denise Maher
*Susan & Steve Massopust
Shane & Carol Matt
Jordan & Jacob McArthur
*Constance McVier
Tim & Tami Meadors
Todd & Erin Menkhaus
*Tom & Grace Merkwan
Roger & Karen Meyer
*Diane Meyers
Jordan Miller, STM ’12
*Steven & Barb Miller
Miriam Dunmire Trust
*Caitlin Muhlbieier, STM ’06
*Douglas Murano, Sr.
Brendan & Jonette Murphy
*Tammy & Greg Murray
*Lisa & Andy Mycsofski, STM ’99
*Matthew & Carissa Naasz
Jim & Mary Ellen Newman
*Craig Nowotny
Philip O’Connor
Jeremy & Christine O’Connor
Thomas & Carolyn O’Mara
*Susan & Greg Oleson
*Rich & Mary Helen Olsen
Scott & Sandi Olsen
*Tony & Yvonne Palli
Laurie Palmer
Matt & Michelle Pawelski, STM ’94
*Curtis & Phyllis Peacock
Brian & Kara Pfannenstein
*Barb & Todd Phillipe
Dan & Gayla Piroutek
*Shelly Porvasnik
Alan & Tracy Ponto
*Lloyd Potter
Father Kerry Prendiville
Michael & Melody Ramey
*Molly & Tim Rausch, STM ’00
Don Rausch
Louis & Julie Raymond
Ron & Marian Reed
Christopher & Kelly Reinke
Howard & Mary Rice
Daniel & Darlene Richer
Paul & Debbie Roberts
*Terry & Carlene Roper
Morgan Rossknecht
Rosemary Rounds
Travis Rypkema
Don & Mary Sachs
**Susan Safford
Rob & Betsy Sage
Jake Satter, STM ’16
*Robert & Lanette Satter, SMA ’87
Karon Schaack
Deacon Jim & Barb Scherr
John & Joyce Schlimg
Mike & Ester Schmidt
Dale Schumacher
Greg & Melissa Schweiss
*Jennifer & Josh Schweppen
STM ’00
Lycia Scott-Thornburg
*Mirl Searies
*Andrew Shaw
Donal & Catherine Sieger
Matthew & Lynn Simmons
Don & Florence Skinner, CHS ’58
Michael & Heidi Small
Bill & Mary Snyder
*Michael Solano
Del & Mary Solano, CHS ’58
Southside Cleaners
Rosalie Stangle
Donna Steckler
David & Pamela Stenehjem
**Corrie & Angie Stephens
Matt & Kathy Stone
*Corey & Steph Strand, STM ’98
Derek & Julie Suhr
*Wayne & Lorrie Sullivan
Frank Taggart
Harley Taylor
Hubert Theissen
*Jana & Chad Thies
Marianne Thompson
Brad & Jodi Thomsen
Gerald D. Tomac
* Vic Toscana, CHS ’61
*Tami & Jamin Tremmel
Deacon Fred & Maryann Tully
Sharla Ulrich
Kenneth & Kathleen Van Asma
Joseph Venjohn
*Mark & Shelby Vickers
*Angela & Dustin Wagner, STM ’00
Nick & Katie Wald, STM ’98
*Angela Weber
Alberta Welch
Fred & Paula Welsch
*LeAnn Wenger
*Marcia Werner
*Corey & Marni Whalen
*Alaina Wheeler
James & Jana White
Jay & Shannon White
Larry & Joyce Williamson
Kevin & Lynn Wilson
**Father Edward G. Witt, SJ
Greg & Nan Wittenberg
John & Judy Wolf
*Tibor Wood-Crosby
Russell Wyatt
Ronald & Beverly Young
Fred & Barbara Ziegler
54 Anonymous
*Staff members
**School Board members
BARB HONEYCUTT grew up in Wisconsin, as the eighth of nine children. She and her siblings learned a strong work ethic working in the family restaurant for over 15 years. This is also where she developed a love of cooking for others. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education and Health from the University of Wisconsin at River Falls. A Master's Degree in Elementary Education was completed at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, including full certification in elementary education, K-8. This was followed by completion of a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership, from the University of Sioux Falls in 2005. An Education Specialist Degree was completed in 2008, which included licensure as a Superintendent. She is in her 13th year as Superintendent of the RCCSS. Prior to that, she served as Elementary/Middle School principal at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Married to Bill, they have one son, Patrick, daughter-in-law, Wendy, and three grandchildren, Maggie, Simon, and Logan.

COLLEEN LECY will be entering her 26th year with St. Elizabeth Seton School this fall. She was a classroom teacher for 12 years and just completed her 12th year as the principal. Colleen has five children who all attended the Rapid City Catholic School System and two grandchildren currently enrolled. She feels blessed to be working with children in a setting that allows her to share her faith.

MARY HELEN OLSEN is starting her fourth year as the Middle School Principal. She has served at RCCSS for 30 years as an Enrichment Teacher, the Director of Liturgy, and taught 6th through 9th grade Religion. Her three children, Charlie, Katie and Joey, are RCCSS alums. Mary Helen earned her undergraduate from Texas A&M University, a certificate in Catholic School Leadership and her Master's in Education Leadership from Creighton University, and has completed the Master Catechist certification from the Veritatis Splendour Institute of the Diocese of Rapid City. She and her husband Rich are members of the Cathedral Parish. She loves everything about Middle School kids!

WAYNE SULLIVAN will begin his 29th year with the Rapid City Catholic School System. Wayne taught high school math then became the Middle School Principal and will start his 18th year as the High School Principal. He and his wife, Lorrie, celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary and have 5 children, Jakeb, Savannah, Skylar, Jedidiah, and JonPaul.
At the Rapid City Catholic School System, the safety of our students, staff, and visitors is one of our highest priorities. We work collaboratively to foster a safe, secure learning environment as we deliver on our mission to educate, inspire, and empower all of our students through Christ.

This year, the RCCSS implemented a more proactive approach when responding to threats of school violence. Such events may include active shooter situations and other imminent threats to safety that require schools to lock down. District and school administrators, along with all staff, were trained in August 2017 on a program called ALICE response. This is a less passive approach to a crisis situation that provides our staff more options based on the circumstances of the incident.

The ALICE acronym stands for Alert, Lock down, Inform, Counter and Evacuate. The threat of an active shooter or intruder in our schools is rare but, in today's society, a reality. Therefore, empowering our staff with proactive response strategies, rather than a passive one-size fits all approach is a positive change to our district's emergency response and crisis management plans.

In addition, all three school buildings security camera systems have been upgraded. Ultimately, we hope to never have to utilize an emergency response plan, but in the event we do, please be assured that staff will be well prepared to act in the best interests and safety of our students.

Partnering with the South Dakota Internet Crimes Against Children Task force, RCCSS hosts annual presentation intended to teach attendees how to respond to Cyber-crimes, situations, concerns, or crimes where computers, phones, tablets, emails, clouds, social media or other technology is used to facilitate a crime. The topics covered will include the following: Navigating the Net, Digital footprints, Social media, What to share, What to keep private, Cyber Crimes & Cyber bullying.
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

St. Thomas More Announces Three National Merit Finalists

National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced the names of approximately 7,500 Finalists in the 64th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity at more than $31 million in scholarships.

NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 specifically to conduct the annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

Over 1.6 million juniors in about 22,000 high schools entered the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2017 Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state.

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and his or her high school must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalist’s academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A semi final must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT scores that confirm the student’s earlier performance on the qualifying test.

Destination Imagination: Thinking Outside the Box

For six years, Destination Imagination has been offered at St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Thomas More Middle School, and for the first time St. Thomas More High School. This program encourages students to problem solve in creative and innovative ways. RCCSS recognized the two middle school teams and three elementary school teams who placed first at the State and Regional levels and one middle school team who placed second at the State and Regional Level. Six teams continued to the Global level from RCCSS.

“Destination Imagination is a global educational nonprofit dedicated to inspiring the next generation of innovators, leaders and creative problem solvers.”

www.destinationimagination.org
Owen Ponto, a seventh-grader at Saint Thomas More High School, initiated an annual hill-climbing event that has raised $17,000 so far to help find a cure for Parkinson’s disease. Owen has seen firsthand what it’s like to have this disease; two grandparents – one from each side of his family – are living with Parkinson’s. “It pains me to see that they both are not able to do the things they used to do,” said Owen. One day in early 2017, he was playing golf with his family when the idea of a fundraiser occurred to him. He and his parents started thinking about ways to raise money and Owen, who loves to hike, decided it would be fun to invite community members to hike up a well-known hill in Rapid City.

After he had settled on the location and date for his first “Climb for a Cure” event, Owen began writing letters seeking sponsorships and personally delivering them to local businesses. He also called and asked people to donate money, gift baskets and other items that could be auctioned off on the day of the climb. He arranged for family and friends to cook food and bake desserts for the fundraiser, worked with a local T-shirt company to design a shirt for participants to wear, and organized yard games such as corn hole, Frisbee, horseshoes and football for after the hike. On the day of the climb, Owen and his family set up tables, decorations, games and food. Owen led the climb, the auction and raffles. He has conducted his fundraiser for two years now, and plans to continue. “I want people with Parkinson’s to know that there are people in the world who are trying hard to help find a cure for their terrible disease,” said Owen.

Owen was named one of two South Dakota’s top youth volunteers of 2019 by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. As a State Honoree, Owen received $1,000, an engraved silver medallion and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C., where he joined the top two honorees from each of the other states and the District of Columbia for four days of national recognition events. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, now in its 24th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

WEST RIVER SPELLING BEE

Violet Grimshaw, St. Elizabeth Seton Fourth grader, competed in the West River Spelling Bee against other students from all over the state of South Dakota. Hosted by the Rapid City Journal and held at Rapid City Central High School, Grimshaw was the last student standing and took first place in the competition. Students ranged in ages from forth grade through middle school.
Mayfest 2019

What was started by parents in 1980 as a way to generate extra income for the Catholic schools, Mayfest Auction Fundraiser has become a staple in our community and needed resource for the school system. The money raised at this event helps us not only at the general budget level, but to plan for tuition changes, increases to teacher salaries and to better allocate the monies we spend throughout the year.

Over the years, Mayfest has raised more than $3 million in support of our Catholic schools. Your participation in Mayfest through donations & sponsorships makes a difference in our students, families, and staff lives. Thank you for your support!

This year Mayfest was held on Saturday, May 4th at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center. Our theme, “An Evening in Paris,” was chosen based on the decorations that were generously donated by the West Hills Village. The largest fundraiser for the Rapid City Catholic School System features a silent and live auction, dinner, raffle and amazing Classroom baskets assembled by parents. The highlight of the evening was a Live Auction item donated by the Nixon Family. A one-of-a-kind rabbit print by artist an STM graduate Leah Nixon, is based on Genesis 37:9

“Then he had another dream, and told it to his brothers. ‘Look, I had another dream,’ he said; ‘this time, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.’”

As the evening continued many generous donors pledged to the Playground Improvement Fund for the St. Elizabeth Seton and St. Thomas More playgrounds. Together with the Colonial House Restaurant and Bar, who donated $5,000 to the fund, the playgrounds will be upgraded with shade structures, new slides, and swings.

We celebrated the biggest win for Matt & Michelle Pawelski who won free tuition for a year at the Mayfest Raffle! Anyone who attended the event was entered into a drawing for free tuition for one student. The Pawelski’s were shocked and pleased! Congratulations Matt, Michelle, Ethan, Hannah, and Evie.
“I have attended RCCSS since I was in preschool. St. Thomas More has helped me grow academically, athletically, and most importantly in my faith. The relationships I have made at STM help carry me and teach me how to live a faithful and confident life. Without my experiences here, and the spiritual guidance along the way, I would not have been shaped into the person I am today.”
Lizzy Elder, Junior at STM

“I have been a student of the Rapid City Catholic School System since preschool, which makes it almost 13 years. I am so grateful for the faith and education I have received. My favorite part of school is sharing my faith with other members of the RCCSS family. There are so many great faculty, staff, and students to help you with school or life in general. It’s easy to talk with everyone because almost everybody knows one another.”
Abby Wagner, Junior at STM

“My time at St. Thomas More has been such a blessing. Not only have I been given the resources necessary to prepare for college adequately, but also for life as a whole. I have been surrounded by hard-working and caring people, students and teachers alike. Faith has been an inherent component of everything at the school, and allows for everything within the busyness to keep its proper perspective. I have been blessed to participate in a number of sports and other extracurricular activities, and because of them I have gained a number of life skills that cannot be taught in the classroom. Without this school, I would not be the person I am today, and I will hold onto and cherish the impact this school system has had on me for the rest of my life, both in college and beyond.”
Spencer Lund, Senior at STM
COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our faith teaches us to be good stewards of our time, talent, and treasures. The RCCSS hosts a variety of opportunities to give back to our community.

Those opportunities include: Winter Coat drive, Thanksgiving meals for families at Catholic Social Services, Christmas Angel tree for children and senior citizens, KOTA Care & Share Food Drive, Pennies for Patients Leukemia Foundation, Then Feed Just One (Packing Hope), Cancer Awareness Football Night, and opportunities to support our own families in need. In addition, the students have community service projects for which they dedicate their own time that total close to 12,000 hours!

STM Middle school Student Council members delivered long underwear donations purchased for the Corner Stone Mission. Students purchased “longjohn” donuts to support the effort.

Thank you for your support of the Rapid City Catholic School System. We invite you to send your questions, comments, or feedback related to this report to the Development Office by email at rsatter@rccss.org or by calling us at (605) 348-1477.