



St. Thomas More Catholic School

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January 5, 2024

Dear St. Thomas More Catholic School Family,

We have finalized the 2024-25 school budget, thanks to the dedication of our church and school leadership. Through careful planning and support from the Parish Finance Council and School Advisory Board, we will maintain our high-quality education and excellent campus facilities.

With responsible expense management and conservative enrollment projections, we've kept increases minimal at 5.5% for next year's tuition, despite higher inflation. This was possible due to the incredible support from our Home and School Association, individual donors, and matching gifts.

For those facing financial challenges, we offer tuition assistance programs, including [NCSEAA Opportunity Scholarship](#), Diocesan Tuition Assistance, and [FACTS Grant and Aid](#), with \$223,919 allocated from the church and school endowment to the FACTS program. Details are available on the Tuition Fee Schedules which are attached and on the school website.

NC Opportunity Scholarship Expansion

The NCSEAA Opportunity Scholarship Program has expanded its program and will implement the following changes for the 2024-2025 school year include:

- Removal of the income cap for families to receive the scholarship; now all North Carolina students in kindergarten through 12th grade will be eligible for the Scholarship regardless of income.
- Prior public-school enrollment is no longer a requirement for eligibility for the scholarship.
- A student's scholarship amount will be based on [household income](#).
- Scholarship amounts will range from approximately \$3,000 to approximately \$7,000.

The Opportunity Scholarship application for the 2024-2025 school year will open on **February 1, 2024**. Families must apply by March 1 to receive priority consideration. More information about the application process will be available on the program [website](#).

School Resource Officer Update

As we considered the role of a School Resource Officer and after much deliberation, we found that our collaboration with CHPD and first responders remains robust, ensuring a safe environment during Masses and active participation in refining and supporting our safety protocols. Our Safety and Security Teams, School Advisory Board, and School Administration shared valuable insight on balancing mental health and safety concerns and therefore are allocating additional resources for counseling. This includes adding an additional counseling position in the upcoming budget, emphasizing the importance of mental health in preventing safety issues. We will take this year ahead as an opportunity to follow the pilot schools in the Diocese who have hired such a position as we continue to consider this decision each year.

Some members of our school community have inquired about the total cost of hiring an officer. We have determined that it would cost between \$65K-\$100K annually, depending on type of officer that is hired (an armed, retired officer or an officer supplied by the CHPD who would be specifically assigned to St. Thomas More). We would not be able to move forward with the position until we had two years of expenses in

savings. If you are interested in assisting to fund this position, please reach out to Carlos Lima, Director of Operations and Finance at 919-942-6232 or clima@stmchapelhill.org.

2024-2025 Re-Enrollment

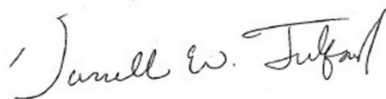
Re-enrollment for 2024-25 opens on January 5th through the FACTS Family Portal, streamlining the process with no paperwork. Remember, the deadline is **February 1, 2024**, with a late fee of \$50 thereafter, potentially affecting seat availability.

We deeply appreciate the dedication of parent volunteers, faculty, and staff, whose contributions shape our exceptional school environment. Your support ensures our ability to fulfill our mission and spiritual and educational goals for our children.

Please consider sharing our community with friends and neighbors, supporting future enrollment for an active, vibrant future. For any queries, reach out to Linda Raymond in the Admissions office at lraymond@stmcsnc.org.

Thank you for your unwavering support of our school and mission.

In Christ,



Darrell Fulford
Principal



Very Rev. Scott E. McCue, V.F.
Pastor