



October 4, 2016

Dear Ladywood Community:

**We emphatically want to put an end to rumors that Ladywood High School is closing – we are most definitely not closing. In fact, we are well positioned for future growth.** Over the last few years, as good stewards of our resources, we have taken the necessary steps to fortify our financial position, and to strengthen and grow our many programs.

The Ladywood Board of Trustees believes the following facts will alleviate concerns and put an end to these damaging and unsubstantiated rumors. We also hope this information will enable you to share the many blessings of our Catholic educational community.

### Financial Strength

- **Ladywood High School is debt free. It has no debt.**
- The **Felician Sisters support our school** as one of its many sponsored ministries. Ladywood High School, along with other Felician-sponsored ministries, receives some financial support. Similar to Catholic schools that receive subsidies from their parishes, we receive a subsidy from the Felician Sisters. **A subsidy is a source of funding, not debt.** Prudently, the Ladywood Board of Trustees has a goal to reduce our subsidy in order not to be reliant on it, and have done so every year under the current administration. Last year (2015-16 school year) we **reduced our subsidy 43 percent over the prior year.**
- We have a **break even athletics budget.** In prior years, our athletic program lost about \$30,000 annually, which is clearly not sustainable. Therefore, the Governance Team and Board of Trustees worked to reduce expenses while **not eliminating any of our 18 varsity sports**, which we consider to be a key benefit to our girls. Other schools of similar size offer between 8-10 varsity sports for their female athletes. Our program continues to excel with three out of four Ladywood students participating in at least one sport. **A testament to the strength of our program and coaching staff is that 10 of our 2016 graduating seniors signed a National Letter of Intent to play a college sport.** We believe creating well rounded women includes athletics and extracurricular activities.
- Due to the generosity of the wider Ladywood community and our committed alumnae, we experienced **an increase of 75 percent in overall fundraising and development.** Collectively, the money raised helps support education and technology infrastructure upgrades as well as ongoing facility maintenance.

### Academic Excellence

- A financially strong school is only excellent if it provides strong academic programs. Ladywood's commitment to educating women leaders continues through our experienced, dedicated and nurturing faculty.
  - Student **ACT scores continue to rise and are well above both the state and national average.**
  - **Our 2016 graduating seniors each earned an average of \$62,000 in academic and athletic scholarships from colleges and universities.**
  - **One in five students at Ladywood is enrolled in our dual enrollment program**, which we offer in partnership with area colleges and universities. Students can earn up to 30 college credits!

- To best position our students for growing technology careers, we continue to offer new curriculum and programs. We launched a robotics club this year and will be competing in the **VEX Robotics Competition**. We offered a **3D printing** camp this summer and have integrated the technology into our science and engineering curriculum.
- Due to the **importance of the arts**, we are **pleased to reinstate our fall musical production** with the performance of *Godspell* next month.

### Catholic Identity

- Importantly, on top of everything we do, we are first and foremost a Catholic school dedicated to helping our students and greater Ladywood community grow in our faith, share it with others and joyfully serve those less fortunate. We have daily prayer, offer Eucharistic Adoration and began a new liturgical student team. We're also pleased to offer the successful "Come Encounter Christ" program next March.
- **Ladywood students volunteered more than 5,000 hours last year to help many worthy organizations.**
- Our mission trip to serve the area poor in Appalachia, in partnership with our sister school, Our Lady of Sacred Heart, in Pennsylvania, is planned for the summer.

As far as class size, due to a number of factors including cost, enrollment at Catholic schools throughout the country has declined. As you know, in this area alone, three Catholic elementary schools have closed. We are not immune to these issues. However, while our freshmen enrollment is smaller than the average class size of the higher grades, Ladywood always has viewed smaller classes as a benefit allowing students, at all learning abilities, to excel through individual attention. We also are proud to offer affordable tuition at a cost under \$10,000.


Despite the environmental challenges, **we've fortified our position and are financially, academically and spiritually strong.** The changes we've made over the last few years have enhanced our position to help the young women entrusted to us excel in today's global world.

We hope this overview is helpful and allays concerns you may have. If you'd like to learn more about the areas noted above, please join members of the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, Oct. 25, at 6 p.m., in the Mother Mary DeSales Activity Center. Please know we're available in the meantime, if you have questions.

With grateful hearts for your commitment and with prayers that God will continue to richly bless our Ladywood community.

Your partners in education,

  
 Sr. Mary Alfonsa Van Overgerghe, CSSF  
 Chair, Board of Trustees

  
 Tracey Mocon, '93  
 Head of School

C: Board of Trustees