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Dear St. Barnabas Families:

We are very excited to share with you that choosing and investing in the gift of Catholic education at St. Barnabas Catholic School just became even more accessible and much easier for all families! Last week, Governor DeWine signed into law an amazing opportunity for every eligible K-12 Ohio student. Every Ohio student in grades K-12 is now eligible for an EdChoice Scholarship which can be used to attend private schools that meet requirements for program participation.

What does this mean for St. Barnabas Families?

- Scholarship amounts are income based.
- Students whose family income is at or below 450% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), or about \$135,000 for a family of four, are eligible to receive the full scholarship amount.
- A student whose family income is above 450% FPL is eligible for a scholarship which decreases on a sliding scale. For example, a family of four with an adjusted gross income (AGI) of \$180,000 could receive \$2,600 per child.
- Based on a preliminary analysis, we believe a significant percentage of our current students would be eligible for a full scholarship to attend St. Barnabas and every student would be eligible for a minimum amount of approximately \$600.

While we had not previously participated in the EdChoice program, Fr. James and I, in consultation with the Diocese, Superintendent Frank O'Linn, our St. Barnabas Business Manager, and Finance Council, have determined that now is the right time for us to join the 98% of Diocesan Schools by becoming a Designated Provider school. This program will put significant money back in our parents' pockets this school year plus allow us to reallocate resources to where they are needed most. This law also sets minimum salary standards for teachers which will help us start to close the gap between our tremendous staff and their public-school counterparts.

We understand that with any new policy or process, there come many questions. First, let us start by assuring all of you that the number one priority is maintaining the St. Barnabas School mission and values as well as academic and behavioral standards. Currently, we have a comprehensive admissions and screening policy in place which allows us to be selective in admitting new students to ensure they meet our rigorous academic and behavioral standards and would be a good fit in our environment. Second, we are only accepting students if we have available seats in their grade level. The state has opened the door to Catholic education for families who previously couldn't afford private school, but we are committed to keeping our class sizes small to give our children the best learning environment possible.

In the meantime, initial tuition payments are still due on Monday, July 17th (because the 15th falls on a Saturday). We will change everyone who has requested the "pay in full" payment plan to quarterly payments so that we won't need to issue refunds down the road. Mary Henefeld, our FACTS administrator will be making those adjustments this week. . If you have any FACTS or financial aid questions, please reach out to her directly at mhenefeld@barnabasohio.org.

There is no action required from you at this time, however we anticipate the Diocese will share more information in the coming weeks regarding specific next steps. We ask for your patience as we develop an implementation and communication plan which will likely include changes to the tuition policy, fee schedules and Angel Scholarship distribution. Please look for a Parent Q & A session toward the end of the month after we have received the pertinent updates from the State and the Diocese.

Please keep our team in your prayers as we work through this exciting opportunity. May God continue to bless you, your families and St Barnabas Catholic School.

Yours In Catholic Education,

Erin Faetanini
Principal