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FENWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARTNERS WITH ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA – ST. LUCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN 5-YEAR PACT

*Neighboring Catholic institutions on Washington Blvd. in Oak Park
share a vision of more diversity, equity and inclusion for future students.*

April 16, 2021, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS -- Over the past 91 years, Fenwick High School has admitted hundreds of students from the former Catholic parish schools St. Catherine of Siena School and St. Lucy Schools, the predecessor schools to the now combined St. Catherine of Siena-St. Lucy School (SCSL), which serves approximately 200 children from preschool through eighth grade. Situated in Oak Park, IL, a few blocks east of Fenwick, SCSL borders the Austin neighborhood on Chicago's west side.

SCSL has raised in excess of \$200,000 for the renovation of Maguire Hall, thanks in part to two major donors: the Malnati and the Barnett families. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Nelson have generously donated towards the new boiler system. Fenwick's Institutional Advancement Department has agreed to market a matching-gift challenge to match the \$200,000 already committed by soliciting from the two schools' joint alumni base.



*Former Fenwick student Sarai Zamora '19 (left)
helping a St. Catherine – St. Lucy grade schooler
with a math word problem in 2018.*

How the funds will be used:

- Once raised, \$100,000 will go toward constructing and equipping the new “Fenwick Center for Educational Excellence” at SCSL, in conjunction with [Fenwick’s existing tutoring program](#) for grade-school students along with other academic initiatives.
- The other half (\$100,000) will go toward establishing the *St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy and Fenwick Partners Scholarship Fund* at Fenwick to benefit incoming students from SCSL.

“All of us at Fenwick are eager to enter into this partnership with St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy School,” said Fr. Richard Peddicord, O.P., Fenwick’s president. “ In a very meaningful way, it will help us to live up to our commitment to celebrate diversity, insist upon equity and create a more inclusive community.”



Raymond Moland (at right), the high school’s Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and a 1996 graduate of Fenwick, added: “This is an outstanding opportunity for both Fenwick and St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy School. It marks the beginning of Fenwick's new outreach efforts in the community and those in the surrounding area.” ([More information on Fenwick’s DEI initiatives.](#))

Mrs. Sharon Leamy, Principal of SCSL, also shared her thoughts on the partnership agreement: “Fenwick High School’s culture of service and strong sense of family mirrors that of St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy School. We believe we are all children of God. We believe there is more to learning than just books. And we believe education is a civil right. We have incredible families and very talented students who make us proud each and every day. We are thrilled a revered institution such as Fenwick recognizes the unique gifts St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy School has to offer and is willing to commit to further strengthening this partnership. Coming together through academics, athletics, and service the lives of all the bright, highly motivated, and faith driven students in the halls of both schools will be enriched. And we are so grateful!”

Future Friars

Fenwick High School is interested in realizing all St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy students who demonstrate cognitive intelligence, intellectual curiosity, humility, a desire to excel and who embrace the pillars of the Dominican order. Fenwick will base acceptance of SCSL students on its entrance exam while consulting with the administration of St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy School to identify students who can thrive in its demanding environment. DEI Director Mr. Moland will work directly with the SCSL Principal Leamy to identify three to five students per year who meet the academic qualifications to be considered as successful prospective applicants to Fenwick High School. This process can begin in the spring of the student’s seventh-grade year. (More than five qualified candidates can be discussed and considered in any given year.)

Then, working with third-party scholarship organizations (for example, Big Shoulders, Daniel Murphy, Hightsight, Link Unlimited, etc.), the Illinois Tax Credit Scholarship Program, and Fenwick's normal financial-aid process, Fenwick will assure that all qualified/admitted students from SCSL are provided a nearly tuition-free education if the student remains at Fenwick for four years.

Vanessa Underwood, St. Catherine - St. Lucy class of 1999 alumna and present fifth-grade teacher, shared: "The partnership between SCSL and Fenwick is a wonderful thing! If the scholarship piece was in place while I was a student here at SCSL, Fenwick would have been my top choice. Unfortunately, the cost was too prohibitive. Today, as a teacher here at SCSL, I am thrilled that my students will have the opportunity that I did not have to attend Fenwick. We have such intelligent, talented students, and I know they will be a tremendous asset to Fenwick for years to come."



Athletics and Activities

As part of the new agreement, for a five-year term beginning in the upcoming 2021-22 school year, Fenwick will be able to use the renovated gymnasium at SCSL as follows:

- *Two days a week, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. during the winter season, November 1st to March 15th.*
- *Three days per week, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. or 6 to 8 p.m. during the winter season, November 1st to March 15th (days negotiable).*

For the same five-year term, Fenwick and SCSL will partner with the following:

- *Once per season Fenwick/St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy will co-host a middle-school basketball tournament using Fenwick's and SCSL's gyms. Both schools will be listed on the tournament title. (Dates to be determined.)*
- *Free basketball clinics for girls/boys at SCSL at two points throughout the winter.*
- *SCSL students will receive one weekend practice time in Fenwick's main gym during each season (fall, winter and spring).*
- *St. Catherine Siena - St. Lucy students will receive one free family pass to any paid Fenwick event.*

Other possible ways for Fenwick and St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy students to interact in the future include joint Christian Service Projects and having Fenwick campus ministry leaders assist with retreats at SCSL.



Principal Leamy (left) concluded: “Ten years ago, the seeds of a wonderful partnership were planted through the development of a tutoring program. St. Catherine of Siena - St. Lucy School welcomed Fenwick High School students on campus to work with the boys and girls in our after-school program. Over the years, we have seen this initiative develop into an incredibly well-structured program benefitting all involved. With the addition of sports clinics and service projects, the eight blocks separating our two schools have developed into a wonderful bridge of opportunity.”

Fenwick Is Celebrating 92 Years: Fenwick High School, founded in 1929, is a Dominican college preparatory secondary institution with a co-educational enrollment of approximately 1,100 students. Guided by its Dominican Catholic values, its mission is to inspire excellence and educate each student to lead, achieve and serve. Today, Fenwick has a Golden Apple teacher on its faculty and an alumni list that includes a Skylab astronaut, Rhodes Scholars, Pulitzer Prize winners, a Heisman Trophy recipient and other leaders making a positive impact locally and internationally. Fenwick is celebrating its 92nd academic year in 2020-21. www.fenwickfriars.com

St. Catherine Siena St. Lucy School 135 Years Strong: With roots planted in 1885, St. Catherine Siena - St. Lucy School has served generations of Oak Park and Austin neighborhood families. We are grounded in faith, proud of where we have been, and exuberant in who we are becoming as a preschool through eighth grade grammar school. An awarded Personalized Learning school, we meet individual learners where they are in their journey and help them map their personal route to success. Educating the whole child, we offer after-school enrichment and encourage participation in our robust athletic program. Modeling our co-founder St. Catherine of Siena, we encourage our students to: “Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.” www.catherinelucy.org