

NEWS RELEASE



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Catholic Schools Week set for January 29 -- February 5

Special events scheduled throughout the week at elementary and secondary schools

January 24, 2012 (OMAHA, NE) – Approximately 20,000 Catholic students, 1,450 teachers and parents in the Archdiocese of Omaha are set to celebrate Catholic Schools Week, January 29 – February 5, part of a nationwide salute to Catholic elementary and secondary schools.

Special events (<http://www.catholicvoiceomaha.com/>) are scheduled throughout the week at 73 Catholic elementary and secondary schools in northeast Nebraska. The events will play off this year's theme, "Catholic Schools - Faith. Academics. Service."

A joint project of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Schools Week became an annual event in 1974. Emphasis on the Gospel, a sense of community and public service has been integral to Catholic Schools Week celebrations ever since.

From Bishop James O'Connor (1876-1891), who from his first days pledged his total commitment to Catholic education, to immigrant parents who struggled and sacrificed to make sure their child was given the best possible start in their new country, Catholic education has enjoyed a long, proud tradition in northeast Nebraska.

Archdiocese of Omaha Catholic schools serves students from families of all racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds. Most people living outside of Omaha are surprised at the number of Catholic schools in the archdiocese – 17 high schools and 56 elementary schools.

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Archdiocese of Omaha Catholic School Facts

- The 73 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Omaha have the fourth largest enrollment (19,485) in the state of Nebraska
- Students consistently score above average on standardized tests
- 96% of all students enrolled graduate from their Catholic high school on time
- 96% of all Catholic high school graduates enroll in colleges, universities, or other post-secondary institutions
- 32 urban elementary schools; 9 urban secondary schools
- 24 rural elementary schools; 8 secondary schools
- In 2010-2011, the combined budget to educate 19,828 students in Catholic schools of the Archdiocese was over \$105 million

2011 American College Test (ACT) Composite Scores

- Archdiocese 24.1
- Nebraska 22.1
- National 21.1

Research by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) identifies five factors that contribute to the decision of parents to choose a Catholic school for their children.

These factors are:

- Quality religious education
- Safe environment
- Quality academic instruction
- Discipline and order
- Sense of community

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Founded as a diocese in 1885, the Archdiocese of Omaha serves spiritual and human needs in a 23-county area of Northeast Nebraska. Through its 147 parishes and missions, the archdiocese reaches out to 227,000 Nebraska Catholics. With two Catholic universities, 56 elementary schools, 17 high schools and a parish-based religious education program within its boundaries, Catholic education enriches the lives of some 58,000 young people. The Archdiocese of Omaha is one of the largest private social service providers in the region. Catholic Charities and the Family Life Office lead a network that ministers to the broadest and most fundamental needs of our community. Generous support to the Annual Appeal is symbolic of the collective faith that allows the Archdiocese of Omaha to continue the mission of Jesus Christ. www.archomaha.org