

### **St. Agnes Academy to Drop Music Program for 2020-2021 School Year**

St. Agnes Academy has regretfully announced the elimination of its music program for the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 outbreak and associated financial constraints that stem from the pandemic.

“We’re extremely disappointed that we’re unable to provide a music curriculum for our students this year but the realities of the current pandemic force us to err on the side of caution,” said Father Christopher Malatesta, Pastor of St. Agnes Church.

The Academy has prided itself on offering a strong arts curriculum with music as a core component. Many local schools, including St. Agnes, have struggled with how best to facilitate a music program. Basic activities such as singing and wind instruments present challenges amidst the need to maintain protocols and regulations that ensure the health and safety of students, teachers, and the school community.

The curriculum change was also spurred by the school’s current financial position. The uncertainty brought by the COVID-19 outbreak is affecting the local economy and presenting challenges to school families and their ability to make the best decisions for their children. “The result is that the pandemic has brought its own distinct financial challenges to our school and enrollment,” said Malatesta. “Unfortunately, we were forced to make a tough decision eliminating the music program with the hope that it will ease our financial situation.”

The decision will result in the elimination of the music teacher’s position, currently held by Anne Marie Desautelle, a long time music instructor in both the public schools and most recently at SAA. “The Academy expresses its deepest thanks to Mrs. Desautelle for her strong dedication to the school and her commitment to the arts,” said Malatesta. “She has been a highly valued member of the faculty and we wish her the very best.”

The Academy will reexamine the situation next year with the potential of reinstating the music program if pandemic-related conditions improve.