



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

Diocese of Salt Lake City

SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE DIOCESE OF SALT LAKE

Many persons have misconceptions about our Catholic Schools. The following facts are meant to clarify some of the confusion and provide accurate information about Catholic Schools:

- The Catholic schools hire teachers who are licensed or in licensure programs.
- All Utah Catholic schools are accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS) and the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA).
- Catholic schools value diversity in their schools. They are proud of the fact that the schools already have a higher degree of racial diversity than the general Utah school population – 29.5% are of ethnic minority; 58% of the ethnic minority is Hispanic.
- Catholic schools have non-Catholic students. In 2009-2010 we had 5,575 students, 76% were Catholic, 24% were non-Catholic.
- The Catholic schools have diocesan curriculum standards which include the state curriculum requirements.
- Teachers are paid less than their public school counterparts at great sacrifice on their part.
- Cost per pupil in elementary/ middle schools is around \$4,125 as opposed to \$5,964 in the public schools. Parents struggle to send their children to our parochial schools due to cost. In the 2009-2010 school year, the Catholic schools gave a total of \$5,042,228 in tuition assistance to families, based on financial need. About 50% of our families receive some kind of tuition reduction. We welcome more children from low-income families and the voucher would facilitate that.
- Catholic schools are financed primarily by tuition. There is some parish support and each school does fundraising to meet operational expenses.
- 95% of Catholic School graduates go on to college.
- Students take an annual national norm-referenced test which is shared with parents/guardians.
- Students are given an entrance exam for placement purposes only, not to choose the brightest students.
- Catholic schools are established only if the population in a geographic area can support them with at least 70% of the students being Catholic. Catholic schools will increase based on the needs of our Catholic population but never pose a threat to public schools.
- Most of the schools have a few openings and some have waiting lists in some grades.
- The Catholic schools accept mild to moderately disabled students. In 2009-2010 nine schools had 174 students in the Carson Smith Scholarship program. Four schools are Title I schools serving 221 students. Every effort is made to work with students who have learning disabilities or behavior problems. The students are not dismissed unless all avenues have been exhausted and it is determined that the school does not meet the needs of the student.
- We believe parents should decide where to educate their children. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education.
- Public schools educate over 95% of the students in Utah. Many of these students are Catholic. Public schools are doing a great job in Utah but parents should be able to choose the school their child attends, public or private.

The Catholic School System has been in Utah for over 130 years with notable success. Parents have chosen to enroll their children in Catholic schools at great sacrifice and financial burden.