

Dear St. John's Family and Friends,

We would like you to know that we have heard your outcries of support for St. John's upon the release of the pending closure notice of the school. Your passion, love, and drive to maintain the school is undeniable and speaks volumes of your attachment to this time honored institution. The announcement has been extremely painful for us all. However, the decision to close the school is not the final act of the Trustees. Discussions have already begun as to what the next chapter will be for SJMS. We are committed to seeing that the doors on the north end of Santa Fe Avenue once again open and have a positive impact on the lives of young people.

Since the announcement, many have asked, "what is the magic number to save the school?" "Tell us how much money is required to keep the school open." Rest assured, fundraising has been at the top of the initiatives list at St. John's for quite some time; unfortunately, our efforts produced only limited success. Even if our efforts had produced great results, we have come to the realization that fundraising alone will not save the school long term, rather it would only delay the inevitable situation we find ourselves in currently. Consistent enrollment is the key to the school's longevity.

If a massive fundraising effort was undertaken at this point, **it would be with a clear understanding that the school would have to transform.** Education of today is not the same as education just 10-15 years ago; the education landscape is different in today's world. Parent expectations of education are different today, not to mention society itself has evolved. Mass media, social media, and the use of technology to communicate have also changed the education landscape.

In today's world, change for St. John's is a must. Transformation, while preserving the long-standing mission of educating and developing the youth of today, is critical to positioning the school for success and stability moving forward. As part of this transformation process, the Board of Trustees would ensure the preservation of the antiquity and history of SJMS within the new environment. At this point, an evolutionary strategy to transform to a new type of educational institution is essential. If transformation does not take place, raising new funds is futile.

At this point, capital improvements in the school are long overdue as well. Whether these improvements are in the school house, the barracks, the gym, HVAC systems, roofs, or other areas, the capital plant itself needs attention. Without improvements in these areas, the ability of the school to competitively attract new cadets in an ever shrinking military school market is reduced.

This brings us back to the initial question: "what is the magic number to save the school?" To keep the SJMS school construct viable, providing funds to address necessary capital improvements and transformation over the next 3-5 years, \$20,000,000 would need to be raised in a very short period of time. These funds would include approximately \$3,000,000 for capital improvements, \$12,000,000 to cover operational shortfalls

during the transformation period, and \$5,000,000 to rebuild an endowment and provide scholarships for future students. Additionally, after enrollment reaches a level that would sustain the school operationally, another \$25,000,000 for capital improvements (i.e. new barracks, new academic wing) would be required to keep the school on pace with other private education facilities.

The call to action is clear: with the objective of keeping the school viable and transforming it for sustained operations, \$6,000,000 of the \$20,000,000 must be raised almost immediately in order for the Board of Trustees to consider future options for the school. The remaining \$14,000,000 must be accumulated over the next 3 years; this effort must include a clear path on how the additional funds will be accumulated (i.e. pledges) as well. The staff of the school is ready to support this endeavor. If you are so inclined, please reach out to them with any and all ideas and commitments. Please know that any private funds given will be refunded if the established goal is not met.

As arduous as it was, the Board of Trustees has made a decision on the direction of the school. As part of developing the transitional strategy, the Board welcomes any and all concepts/ideas as to what could be viable options for the school. At the same time, we have heard you loud and clear. Therefore, if the family and friends of St. John's can raise the necessary funds in a short period of time, commit to transforming the school, and become advocates for recruiting new cadets to the school, we pledge to move forward

St. John's belongs to all of us. To perpetuate our school and its purpose at this point, we must all be willing to contribute to the greater good and assist in the necessary efforts described previously in this letter.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees
St. John's Military School