



In partnership with Gehlen Catholic High School

The Mission of Spalding Catholic School is to instill a belief in God and self, and provide excellence in learning through mutual support, service and Catholic leadership.

www.SpaldingCatholic.org

October, 2023

Dear Spalding Catholic families, staff, supporters, and community,

For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven... - Ecclesiastes 3.

When Spalding Catholic School was incorporated in 1962, the founders envisioned a vibrant school to serve the needs of a large population of Catholic families in this area. Spalding has experienced so many blessings and joys over its 60 years of existence and has been a light to thousands of students, staff, families, and community members in that time.

Over the past 25+ years, Spalding's enrollment has been on a steady decline. For example, in 1996, we had nearly 300 students enrolled. In 2006, we were at 168. In 2016 it dropped to 81. This school year we have only 24 students enrolled. With enrollment in these numbers, it is no longer feasible to continue to operate.

The Spalding Catholic Board of Education, staff, and community members have worked hard trying to reverse this trend but have had limited success. In addition, many of the factors leading to this decline have been outside of our control.

The reality in which we find ourselves has caused us to finally make the decision to close Spalding Catholic School at the conclusion of this current (2023-24) school year.

We will continue to work with our partner Gehlen Catholic School to help provide as smooth of a transition possible for those families who wish to continue their Catholic education.

We cannot begin to thank all who have had a hand in making Spalding Catholic the tremendous experience it has been over these many years. We truly believe that the "good work begun" in the students who have passed through these halls has and will continue to bear fruit in generations to come. Your prayers have been and continue to be appreciated for our young people.

The Spalding Board of Education and leadership will continue to work on and communicate details with our families, staff, parishes, and the school community as they are available. Watch for further communications in the weeks and months ahead.

Thank you for the way in which you have been a blessing to this Spalding Catholic family!

Spalding Catholic School Board of Education

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Will you finish out this current school year?**

Yes. We are committed to making sure the students and staff finish this school year strong.

2. **What will happen to the school building?**

It will be kept up by St Mary Alton parish after official school closing and used initially and primarily as parish center. How it serves our parish and community needs will be determined as other activities \ ministries \ community activities arise, particularly those aligned with Catholic principles.

3. **With the Iowa ESA's being passed recently, don't you think enrollment will turn around?**

Statistically ESA's haven't had a great impact by way of enrollment in smaller schools. Additionally, we have reduced the amount we charge families for tuition over the past few years without any significant change in enrollment.

4. **I want to continue a Catholic education for my child; what are my options?**

Gehlen Catholic School in Le Mars provides a Catholic education. The Pilgrim Cluster parishes are part of that corporation. For those families further north, St Patrick's, Sheldon may be an option, although our parishes are not part of the St Pats school corporation. Recently, a Catholic home school co-op was begun in our parishes which could also be an option. Additionally, there is the option of our Religious Education Program, if your family chooses to not continue with a Catholic school education.

5. **Why was a geothermal system installed if the school was going to close?**

The old boiler system in the school was 30 plus years old and needing to be replaced. The geothermal system was best option by way of cost \ efficiency. The building will remain and needs to be maintained.

6. **What will happen with the teachers and staff?**

We know that our teachers and staff are highly qualified and among the best. We will aid them in whatever way we can to help them find quality employment. Please keep them in your prayers during this transition. If there might be positions open at Gehlen Catholic and they are qualified, they will certainly be considered.

7. **What will happen with our partnership with Gehlen Catholic School?**

Our partnership will remain and be enhanced with more potential students.

8. **How will parents of students with special needs or EL services needs be supported as they seek relocation of their students to another school? If they choose Gehlen Catholic, will there be adequate services available to meet their needs?**

This will be looked at on a person-by-person basis and in conjunction with school administration.

9. **What will become of the equipment and materials after school closes?**

This is to be determined, however, we want to be sure the equipment used for learning remains in use for this purpose.

10. **What if I have additional questions?**

Please email any additional questions to: contact@spaldingcatholic.org