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Senior artist creates
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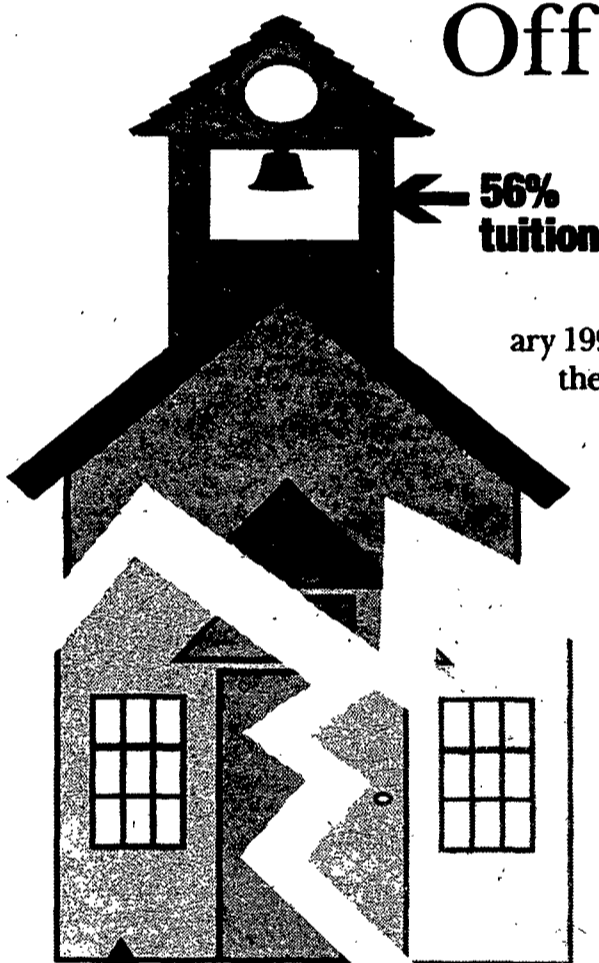


Catholic Courier

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School Budgets

Officials say stability is goal



56%
tuition

30% parish subsidy
Revenue

14%
other

With revenue from tuition, parish contributions and local fundraisers, diocesan Catholic schools carry on their mission of educating more than 13,000 students.

"K-8 schools throughout the Diocese represent a significant financial enterprise," Bishop Matthew H. Clark wrote in the Rochester Diocese's January 1997 plan on school governance, "Lighting the Way: A Catholic School Response to the Synod."

"We invest far more dollars in this ministry than in any other area of church life," the bishop noted.

The Catholic schools of Monroe County, for example, expect to fine-tune a budget of \$22 million to \$23 million for the school year that begins next month. It's always a tight budget, matching expected income and expenses, but if the county schools succeed, 1997-98 will be the fifth consecutive year of balanced budgets, according to Timothy Dwyer, diocesan superintendent of schools.

And enrollment appears stable, fluctuating only 1 percent during the past three to four years, according to Sister Anne Guerin, SSJ, assistant superintendent for school advancement.

"Stability is the whole thing we're aiming for," observed Sister Guerin, who added that she anticipates continued stability in both budget and enrollment.

Enrollment had dropped significantly at some of the schools since major consolidation efforts began in 1989. From 1989 to 1994, the diocese closed 14 Rochester-area Catholic elementary schools.

"We consider us to be very stable now, and with careful management we'll remain in good shape,"

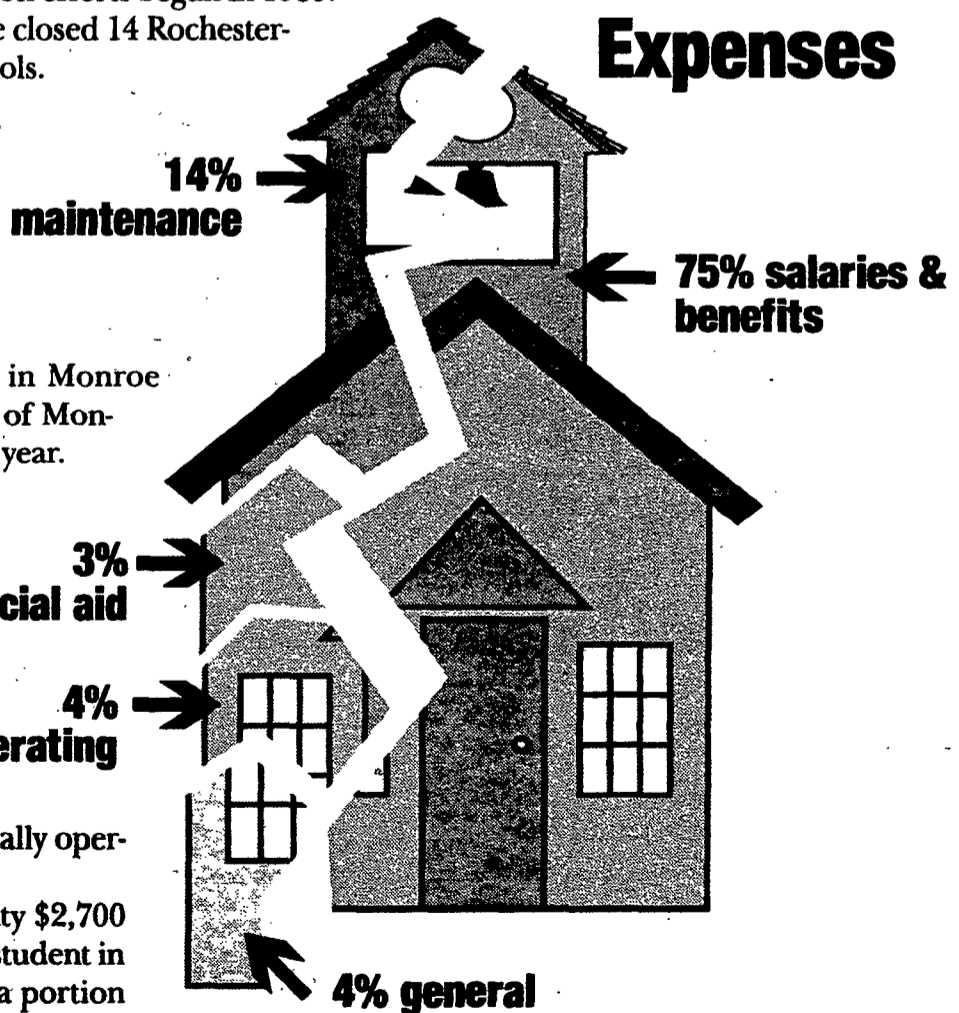
Dwyer agreed. Yet, he added, "We never have a lot of wiggle room when we prepare the budgets — we try not to, purposely."

Budgeting for all 31 Catholic elementary schools in Monroe County has been centralized, in the Catholic Schools of Monroe County annual budget, since the 1995-96 school year.

The system attempts to even out spending at the schools, which must fit within the budget provided. However, schools are allowed autonomy, for example, in planning curriculum, choosing books and hiring personnel who are validated by the diocese.

Catholic schools around the diocese budget similar percentages for expenses, such as salaries, Sister Guerin said. However, the 20 elementary schools outside Monroe County are individually operated and budgeted.

While it costs the Catholic Schools of Monroe County \$2,700 a year to educate a child — vs. an estimated \$7,850 per student in the Rochester City School District — parents pay only a portion of this cost.



Expenses

14%
maintenance

75% salaries & benefits

3%
financial aid

4%
operating

4% general

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