

BISHOP BARAGA SCHOOL STORM DAMAGE UPDATE

AUGUST 14, 2020

PUBLISHED WEEKLY TO UPDATE THE PARISHIONERS OF THE CPR PARISHES AS WELL AS THE BISHOP BARAGA SCHOOL FAMILIES ON THE PROGRESS OF REBUILDING THE SCHOOL FROM THE STORM DAMAGE, UPDATES ON THE BEGINNING OF THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR AND OTHER SCHOOL NEWS.

Summer is still with us for a few more weeks. The school and parish leadership hope you have enjoyed these beautiful days the Good Lord has bestowed on Cheboygan.

Damaged Building Update

Early next week a temporary roof will be in place over the still open areas of the back of the school. Salvageable, useable contents are almost done being cleaned and sterilized. Electronics have been evaluated and it appears that about 90% of computers, including the Chromebooks, are fine. They just need to be cleaned and sterilized and returned to Cheboygan. Other items are still being evaluated, but there may be other things that will need to be replaced like the SMART boards, and some other items with electronic components.

Once all this remediation work is completed, hopefully within the next two weeks, the next step is to work with the insurance company, including the adjustor, the engineer, the architect, and the contractor. They will go room-by-room to list what needs to be done to bring the building back to the way it was when the damage occurred. Once they determine that, it will be presented to us to make changes or enter discussion on anything we might not agree with or that we want to change, at our expense (like more insulation), before the actual work begins. Once all parties are on the same page, the work will begin in bringing the building back to usable condition. How long will that take? Pick a date...your guess is as good as ours this early in the game.

To sum up... things are moving ahead as quickly as possible and everyone is working diligently in getting us back into our own building once again as soon as feasible and safe for all.

Start of the School Year

Where?

Some buildings we have checked into have been: The Armory, The Knights of Columbus Hall, the old K-Mart building, Black River Full Gospel Church (the old Black

River Elementary School building), the old West High Elementary School building, the old Junior High School building, St. John Lutheran Church, the Public School Administration Building-Inverness School, the old Moran Ironworks building, and a few others. So far, most had to be eliminated because the bad shape of the building, but most because they would not meet the codes to house an elementary school any longer. However, there is hope...

One of the buildings, Westside, is in the process of being sold, but the sale will not be finalized for possibly a couple months. As of today, Friday, August 14, both the current owner and the purchaser would be open to leasing space to us. Now we have to work with attorneys, insurance companies, boards, the State inspectors and licensing bureau, and so forth. Nonetheless, our prayers seem to be in the process of being answered. But, God is also teaching us to practice patience!

Even if everything falls into place, we will not be able to start school in person on September 8.

When and How?

Preschool

Preschool will be held at the Cheboygan High School Building as soon as the licensing is completed and all inspections are done. Start date will not be September 8, but hopefully the next week. Those families should wait for updates as we get them.

Grades Kindergarten through 7

School will begin on Tuesday, September 8 for grades K through 7. However, through the month of September all classes will be virtual. There is simply nowhere to have in-person classes until we have a building. If everyone prays, and all requirements go smoothly, the hope is to be back to in-person classes in October. The faculty is hard at work getting all the specifics ready for families on how it will all work, so watch for more details. (Depending on what happens with the virus and the meetings this weekend with legislators, everyone may be going virtual along with us!)



We all recognize this is not ideal. It is not the way we hoped to start school. It's not what was already prepared to take place. The ultimate goal is to be back to in-person classes just as quickly as we can! Nonetheless, this may be working to our advantage.

If other school do begin with in-person classes and then have to switch back to all virtual, we will know our kids have not had the exposure others had by attending classes in a school building. There is also the chance that right up until September 8, the Governor, and the Legislature who is meeting this weekend, might be making new protocols for how all school will start back to classes. And, everything could change at any time.

Further Financial Assistance

This is why we have made the decision to start with virtual classes at this time at least through September. There may be some families suffering economic hardships, especially with paying tuition and now might be facing the prospect of paying for child care during the day while they are at work on top of it. All is not lost! The Diocese of Gaylord has granted us some funds to assist in this very issue. An application form for financial assistance, beyond what may have already been given, is being put together and will be out soon. Watch for more details, maybe in next week's update.

Looking Ahead

More information with be given next week about the following:

- Parent Town Hall Meeting on Zoom
- Student/Parent/Teacher Orientation Online
- Pick up of student texts
- Application for Child Care Credit signed by provider

Fundraising

The fundraising initiated by the Straits Area Federal Credit Union is going exceeding well. Thank you CU staff! A great portion of damage and lost contents will be covered by insurance, however, we wish to grab this opportunity to improve what we had before the storm and make the school even better. That's where the additional funds will be needed. This requires some "additional" fundraising to do, besides the fundraising already in the budget for operating expenses like every year.

These events are in the works and YOUR help is needed!

Pulled Pork Dinner

Ann Couture, school secretary, is working out of the St. Mary St. Charles Church basement, our temporary school office, and she is taking names of volunteers to help with the upcoming 'drive thru dinner' scheduled at the **Knights of Columbus Hall on Wednesday 26, August**. To make this successful, many volunteers are needed. Call (231) 627-5608 or (231) 290-1952 to find out what you can help with, either in preparing or helping at the dinner. You can also call the same number for more information about the event.

Pop Bottles and Can Returns

Pop bottles and cans returns have been moved to the parking lot back at Bishop Baraga School. A tent has been set up in the parking lot for the many returns being donated. This is a great fundraiser for the school but it has grown beyond the control of the few families that have been trying to keep up with it. Parents might want to take advantage of this opportunity to fulfill required volunteer hours through this fundraiser. In order to add to the already \$10,000 currently raised, and to keep ahead of things, help is needed!

Along with the actual help in sorting, etc., **everyone donating bottles and cans can assist by rinsing out your cans and bottles before dropping them off. If possible, please sort them into separate bags before dropping them off – cans in one bag, bottles in another. If you are really ambitious and helpful, sort Pepsi products from Coke Products and "other" products, while still keeping bottles and cans in separate bags. THANK YOU!**

Call Christina Morton (231) 818-9010 to for more information.

As we continue in Christ's name!

Fr. Duane Wachowiak – Pastor
Kitty LaBlance – Principal
And Parish and School Staff and Leadership

School Phone Number (231) 627-5608

Parish Phone Number (231) 627-2105

To access the temporary School Office in the St. Mary/St. Charles Church basement, park in the lot across from the church on North "D" Street and enter the new elevator entrance.