

PROVIDENCE-ST. MEL HIGH SCHOOL

EIGHTY-FIVE PER CENT OF THIS HIGH SCHOOL'S GRADUATES GO ON TO UNIVERSITIES LIKE YALE, PRINCETON AND NORTHWESTERN. AND UNLIKE A NUMBER OF OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE CITY THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS HERE LIKE DRUG ABUSE, DISCIPLINE OR GANGS. IN SHORT, THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IDEAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE CITY. WE ARE AT PROVIDENCE-ST. MEL, AND COME JUNE 30 THE DOORS OF THIS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL INSTITUTION MAY JUST CLOSE FOR GOOD.

THIS IS A CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL...THE LAST CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL REMAINING ON THE CITY'S WEST SIDE. THE ARCHDIOCESE HAS SOUNDED THE DEATH KNEEL FOR IT, HOWEVER, FOR FINANCIAL REASONS. BUT THE STUDENTS, FACULTY, PARENTS, ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE SCHOOL HAVE LAUNCHED A MASSIVE CAMPAIGN TO KEEP THESE DOORS OPEN. MORE THAN \$25,000 HAS BEEN RAISED IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS ALONE. THE SCHOOL'S SUPPORTERS SAY THAT THEY CAN RAISE ENOUGH MONEY TO KEEP THE SCHOOL GOING AND THEY HAVE DEMONSTRATED NOT ONLY WILLINGNESS BUT ABILITY TO DO SO.

THE ARCHDIOCESE HAS CITED DECLINING ENROLLMENT AND THE HIGH COST OF PERFORMING ESSENTIAL BUILDING REPAIRS AS MAJOR FACTORS IN ITS DECISION TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL. THE SCHOOL'S PRINCIPAL COUNTERS THAT THE ENROLLMENT FIGURES HAVE RISEN THIS PAST YEAR AND THAT VARIOUS BUILDING CONTRACTORS AND LABOR UNIONS HAVE AGREED TO VOLUNTEER THEIR SERVICES TO FIX THE BUILDING.

THERE HAS BEEN A GROUNDSWELL OF SUPPORT TO SAVE PROVIDENCE-ST. MEL FROM PEOPLE OF ALL WALKS OF LIFE. THE ARCHDIOCESE SHOULD RECONSIDER ITS DECISION AND GET ON THE BANDWAGON. I'M PHIL BOYER.