



FAQ's

Answers to frequently asked questions about the merger of St. Bartholomew School and PFGA

Q: Is St. Bart's closing?

A: St. Bart's school building will close and all students are invited to enroll in PFGA.

Q: Why is St. Bart's closing?

A: It is in the best interest of students to create a more robust learning environment. Uniting the student bodies of St. Bart's and PFGA on one campus will stabilize financials and couple resources to offer academic and extracurricular opportunities that the individual schools could not offer on their own.

Q: Why doesn't PFGA move into St. Bart's building?

A: Whenever the Archdiocese consolidates schools, an effort is made to disrupt as few students as possible, especially at lower grades. PFGA currently enrolls 50% more students in preschool through third grade than St. Bartholomew, which was a major factor in choosing the current PFGA building.

Q: Can this be stopped?

A: No. A unification is necessary as St. Bartholomew school is unable to meet financial obligations next school year due to low enrollment.

Q: What will happen to St. Bart's school building? Will it be sold?

A: The St. Bartholomew school building will remain owned by Our Lady of the Rosary Parish after the school unification. Its future use will be determined by the parish. There are no plans to sell it.

Q: Do all St. Bart's students have to go to PFGA?

A: No. Families are encouraged to enroll in the school that best fits the needs of their child(ren).

Q: If I want to send my child to PFGA next year, do I need to register/enroll?

A: Yes. While all families that wish to attend PFGA from St Bartholomew are guaranteed a spot, families must register their child for planning purposes. Registration information will be distributed in the coming weeks.

Q: Who will be the principal?

A: Mrs. Nilma Osiecki will be the new principal of PFGA. Mrs. Osiecki holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, Bilingual Bicultural Studies from Northeastern Illinois University and a master's degree in General Education, Supervision and Administration, also from NEIU. Mrs. Osiecki is currently a student at Loyola University pursuing a doctorate degree. She has extensive experience in areas around bilingualism and multicultural studies, social-emotional learning, special and gifted education, best teaching practices, and conducting professional development for teachers and other educators.

Q: What about my child's scholarship? Will that transfer with us?

A: For Tax Credit Scholarships (TCS), families may change the selected school from St. Bart's to another school choice. We recommend that you make the change prior to the end of January before the two organizations commence awarding of scholarships. This will ensure that your child retains their original place in line for a tax credit scholarship.

For Empower Illinois, a family may either select another school in the drop-down menu in the Empower Illinois Student Portal or contact the helpline at 800-616-7606 or via email at scholars@empowerillinois.org who can make the change on their behalf.

For Big Shoulders SGO, they will contact you soon and ask you to select a different school on your BSF application.

Q: What uniforms will be worn next year?

A: That still needs to be decided.

Q: What will bell times be for the 2023-24 school year?

A: Mrs. Osiecki will seek input from both communities and announce bell times at a later date.

Q: What will happen to the teachers and staff at both schools?

A: All teachers and staff will have an equal opportunity to apply for positions at PFGA for 2023-24. We hope to retain everyone within our Catholic school system.

Q: What will the new school be called?

A: The name of the merged school will be Pope Francis Global Academy.

Q: What will my child's tuition be next year at PFGA?

A: Students currently attending St. Bartholomew School will receive a one-year tuition freeze at Pope Francis Global Academy. Tuition for the 2023-24 school year will remain the same as your family currently pays this school year, provided there are no

significant changes in your family's financial situation. Families with changes to their financial situation will be reviewed during the registration and financial aid process.