



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 23, 2020**

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### **New Catholic high school to open August 2020 for students with special needs**

Pensacola, FL — The Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee announces the opening of a new Catholic high school for students with special needs. Morning Star High School of Pensacola, opening in August, will be an independent institution located on the campus of Pensacola Catholic High School, 3043 W. Scott St.

Morning Star High School of Pensacola will provide a faith-filled Catholic education to students with special needs in the Pensacola community. By serving students with love and support, the administration, faculty and staff will prepare students for independence and success after high school. The curriculum goal is for students to earn a high school diploma after five to six years, taking into consideration that the student will need more time and assistance, as well as an alternative means of assessment as they progress toward that goal.

“It is our goal to help parents educate and form the minds and hearts of all of our students, including those who may need extra care and help. Morning Star High School of Pensacola will ensure that all of our brothers and sisters receive an excellent education together with their classmates across the diocese,” said Bishop William A. Wack, CSC.

Tuition is expected to be \$12,500 per year. The McKay Scholarship Program or the Gardiner Scholarship Program may be applied toward tuition.

The diocese anticipates needing \$200,000 in startup costs to open the school. To date, pledges have exceeded \$186,000. Once the goal is met, the overage will help offset additional operational costs and provide scholarships for families who can’t afford the full tuition rate.

“I have been truly humbled by all the hard work of the committee members over the past two years, and excited by the strong show of support from the founding donors who have stepped up to make this high school a reality for these students,” said Dave Kimbell, committee chair. “In the coming months, we’ll be hiring a program director, beginning the admission and enrollment process, and preparing the site for a classroom building.”

Kimbell says that Sister Kierstin Martin, principal of Pensacola Catholic High School, and the administration have been instrumental in ensuring there will be opportunities for inclusion at Catholic High School.

Currently, there are 11 pre-registered students for the program. The diocese anticipates 15 enrolled students by August.

There are currently two elementary/middle school Morning Star programs in the diocese: Sacred Heart Cathedral School and St. John the Evangelist Catholic School. Both are located in Pensacola.

For more information, visit [www.ptdiocese.org/morningstarhs](http://www.ptdiocese.org/morningstarhs).

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