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OPINION

ANOTHER VOICE | EDUCATION

Catholic schools prepare young people to lead

ROBERT M. BENNETT

Strong schools are built on more than tradition. They are built on a shared vision, responsible leadership, and a commitment to continuous improvement. That is the opportunity before Catholic education today.

The creation of a unified K-8 Catholic school system is a commitment to strengthening Catholic education for generations to come. The diocesan School Board recognizes both the remarkable successes and the real challenges facing many of our 27 schools.

Catholic schools have always embraced the dignity of every person, and we are committed

to strengthening our ability to serve students with a wide range of academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and learning needs. Building the capacity of our schools to welcome and support all learners is not simply an educational priority—it is an expression of our Catholic mission to recognize the God-given worth of every child.

The comprehensive K-8 plan will soon be submitted to the state's Education Department, and we are proud that the Middle States Commission approved every aspect of the initiative without exception. These milestones reflect careful planning, accountability, and a shared

commitment to continuous improvement.

Our goal is for every graduate to leave our schools with a strong academic foundation, a thorough understanding of the Gospel, an appreciation for the Mass, and a lasting commitment to living a life of faith. We believe that kindness, compassion, integrity, generosity, understanding, and service to others are the defining characteristics of Catholic leaders.

Looking ahead, the board's priorities are clear. We will continue enhancing fundraising efforts, strengthening cooperation among all 27 K-8 schools, expanding opportunities for all learners, and promoting a more

civil society through Catholic education.

Catholic education has long shaped not only successful graduates, but faithful, compassionate citizens. By embracing collaboration while remaining firmly rooted in our Catholic identity, we can ensure that our schools continue to inspire academic excellence, nurture faith, welcome every learner, and prepare young people to lead with character, purpose, and hope for generations to come.

Robert M. Bennett is chancellor emeritus of the New York State Board of Regents and a member of the Western New York Catholic Schools Board.

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Robert J. Bennett has been a strong supporter of Catholic Schools for decades.