



DIOCESE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

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Morning Star School Breaks Ground for New High School

Jacksonville, Fla. – Morning Star School, the only special education school in the Diocese of St. Augustine, is breaking ground for a new high school on Tuesday, Nov. 29, at 9 a.m. at its campus, 725 Mickler Road – adjacent to Christ the King Catholic Church in Jacksonville.

Bishop Felipe Estévez, Father Michael Houle, episcopal vicar of Finance and Development for the Diocese of St. Augustine and Deacon Scott Conway, superintendent of Catholic Schools, will participate in the ceremony.

The \$1.5 million capital campaign project includes eight classrooms – four for middle school and four for high school – and a media and technology center.

“Our high school program will partner with Bishop John J. Snyder High School to provide a full and rich high school experience including individualized academic programs, job skills, life and social opportunities” said Principal Jean Barnes. “What a blessing this will be to families all over Northeast Florida who search each year for an appropriate educational placement for their children,” she added.

The high school was launched last fall with the addition of ninth grade. The new wing to the existing school will accommodate 48 students. It is expected to be ready by August 2017.

Founded in 1956 by Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley, Morning Star School serves students who have a diagnosed learning disability, attention deficit disorders, high-functioning autism and mild intellectual disorders.

The school has 118 students from five surrounding counties in kindergarten through ninth grade. There are only two other special education high schools in Jacksonville. Morning Star is the only one providing a Catholic education.

The school has a unique model – a 12:1 student-teacher ratio, individualized education and a partnership with Bishop John J. Snyder High School.

The students are taught the same curriculum used in other Catholic schools, using an individualized study plan.

In addition to a full academic curriculum, Morning Star offers speech and language therapy, guidance services, music, art, physical education and religious education. The school also has a STEM lab, iPad lab and netbook.

“This is an important moment in the life of our very special school. Having the high school program will meet such an important need for our students. We are so grateful to those who have supported our school and mission over the years and those that have stepped forward to help make this vision a reality,” said Father Michael Houle.

For additional information, call Marie Johnson at (904) 721-2144 or visit www.morningstar-jax.org.

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