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## In Our Opinion: New Catholic high school

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By Macomb Daily Editorial Board

**The issue:** Catholic families express a need for a new high school in northern Macomb County.

**Our view:** Funding is available, and big donors must step up to help raise \$24 million.

As Macomb County continues to grow in numbers, families of the Catholic community moving into the expanding northern communities are asking their religious leaders about the need for a Catholic high school.

The only three Catholic high schools in the county are located south of Metropolitan Parkway. One is for boys only, and the two remaining schools are co-ed.

But there is a chance the proposed Macomb County Regional Catholic High School may get off the drafting board and become reality on land on the north side of 23 Mile Road in Macomb Township.

If the funds can be raised to build the proposed \$24 million school, it would be the first new high school in the Archdiocese of Detroit in 30 years.

At an "unveiling of plans" meeting hosted by the MCRHS Committee, parents were told the two-story school would open with the ninth and 10th grades in the autumn of 2008, with the 11th and the 12th grades the following two years.

Committee speakers said the 190 acres for the school was being offered by the archdiocese, provided funding for the school was raised by parents.

One planning member said, "We need some heavy-dollar donors to

get the movement off and running," and stressed, "The archdiocese is being fair. If we believe there is a need for a Catholic high school in north Macomb County, then we should raise the funding to show good faith in this program."

The land offered by the archdiocese has an estimated value of \$3 million.

The high school has the blessing of seven Macomb Catholic parishes. Committee members stress the school's teachers would come from the laity, and that a religious order would be involved with the school.

While the cost of education has multiplied, and will continue to do so, the Macomb County committee and its sponsoring parishes appear headed in the right direction.

They've set some lofty goals in pursuit of a new Catholic high school, and want to place it in north Macomb County to accommodate the county's growing population, now well over 800,000.

In the 1980 census, Macomb Township had 14,230 residents. By the 2000 census, the township's numbers had grown to 50,478. Shelby Township is now at the 65,000 mark, and Chesterfield Township numbers 37,000.

Is northern Macomb County ready for a Catholic high school?

There's no doubt the numbers say yes, but will Catholic families be able to raise the funding the archdiocese says is needed to build the school?

We believe the funding is available, but to raise \$24 million will require professional fund-raising techniques to get a building campaign off the ground. And some heavy donors to get the campaign going.

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