

Effort to force Towson Catholic to remain open stalls in court

A Baltimore County judge dismissed an injunction July 24 to keep Towson Catholic High School open.

Lois Windsor and Hannah Messina, parents of former students at the school, filed the injunction after Immaculate Conception parish announced it was closing Towson Catholic July 7.

Circuit Court Judge Ruth A. Jakubowski denied Windsor and Messina's request to have the Archdiocese of Baltimore reopen the school in August. Windsor and Messina are suing, saying the archdiocese violated a contract between parents and the school based on tuition payments for the coming school year.

An Aug. 5 court date on the lawsuit is set with the same judge. The archdiocese hopes to have the case dismissed.

"We didn't think there were any winners," said Sean Caine, the archdiocesan communications director, of the July 24 dismissal. "A school that educated children for over 87 years was forced to close. Our focus is on the underlying issues that caused the school to close, which is the same that a number of our schools are facing. We're also focused on finding schools for displaced students and jobs for displaced teachers."

Immaculate Conception said Towson Catholic faced a \$650,000 deficit, including \$160,000 in unpaid tuition from the previous school year. It has been working to place students and teachers in other schools and is refunding tuition money paid for the 2009-10 school year.

Monsignor F. Dennis Tinder, pastor of Immaculate Conception, said that Towson Catholic, had it remained open, would not have been able to operate financially past October.