

Shrine of the Sacred Heart School to house public school

Shrine of the Sacred Heart School in Mount Washington may have recently closed its doors, but it's proven to be a window of opportunity for a local elementary school.

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced a partnership Oct. 1 that will allow booming Mount Washington Elementary School to move some grades into the Sacred Heart building.

The Baltimore public school system will lease the building for \$14,500 a month for 10 years. It will also provide maintenance and replace a \$50,000 boiler.

"Next fall, the halls of this school will once again be filled with students and the joyful noise of learning and friendship and community," Archbishop O'Brien said. "May we find new ways and new opportunities to bring this joy to other parts of our city and may the Mount Washington community be strengthened by the partnership we are pleased to enter into this day."

Mayor Rawlings-Blake said she is "sure" Mount Washington Elementary School will carry on the tradition of educational excellence that had been fostered at Shrine of the Sacred Heart School for more than 140 years.

"We will make you proud," she said.

Monsignor Richard Cramblitt, outgoing pastor of Shrine of the Sacred Heart, said that while it was difficult for parishioners to see their much-loved school close, they are pleased the building will continue to be used for its original intent: education.

"It will draw the parish closer to the community," he said, "and it will bring some income into the parish."

Monsignor Cramblitt said parishioners are aware that Mount Washington Elementary School is "the best (public) school in the city." The move will allow Mount Washington Elementary School to expand its program to include a middle

school – a long-sought goal, he said.

“We’re very happy to have them as a tenant,” he said. “People in the community are just beside themselves with joy. It’s a school that has strong parental support and active backing. It’s a win-win situation.”

Archbishop O’Brien said the archdiocese and the city share a common goal of serving others.

“This partnership represents just one way we can achieve that goal,” he said. “I hope it is not only a sign of things to come, but also an example that will inspire collaboration among other such partners.”