

### **Why are St. Columbanus and St. Dorothy Schools merging?**

The streaming together of these two school communities will help us create futures for our children. Due to lower enrollments at both schools, rising operating expenses, and a need to respond to the Archdiocese of Chicago's requirements to be more fiscally responsible, the merger of St. Columbanus and St. Dorothy Schools is an innovative solution to continue the rich heritage and legacy of both school communities.

### **Who made the decision?**

The decision to merge St. Columbanus and St. Dorothy Schools was not an easy one, and the task was not taken lightly. In order to maintain a Catholic school presence in our community without losing both schools, it became apparent a merge between the schools was necessary. After many planning conversations between Fr. Matt O'Donnell (Pastor, St. Columbanus) and Fr. Bob Miller (Pastor, St. Dorothy), and in consultation with both school principals and other school leaders, a pastoral recommendation was brought to the Office for Catholic Schools. Through several conversations and visioning for the future, the Augustus Tolton Catholic Academy at St. Columbanus Parish emerged. Ultimately, the decision was collaborative; but, the conversation began with, and was led by, the Pastors of both communities.

### **What makes the Augustus Tolton Catholic Academy a "new" school?**

The merger of St. Columbanus and St. Dorothy Schools into one building presents an opportunity to imagine a new and creative way of continuing Catholic education on the Southside of Chicago. The Augustus Tolton Catholic Academy is adopting a new curriculum. Two school communities will be under one roof. Two legacies of educational excellence will be streamed together to forge a new school because it brings the very best of resources and values from St. Columbanus and St. Dorothy into a dynamic future.

### **What is a STREAM Curriculum?**

The Tolton Academy's STREAM Curriculum will be a first of its kind in the Archdiocese of Chicago! STREAM stands for Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math. The focus on these six areas of study will prepare our students for academic success in high school. We are adopting an innovative curriculum that will challenge our students to excel in all of their future endeavors. The Tolton Academy's curriculum will lay a foundation for our students to ensure they are technologically advanced, ahead of other students in Math and Science, and introduced to Engineering. Our focus on the Arts will stir up the creativity of our students through partnerships with local musicians, artists, and writers. Finally, as a Catholic School we will continue teaching the rich history of the Catholic faith and prepare our students to live as disciples of Jesus Christ.