



## NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

February 12, 2014

The Most Reverend Carlo Maria Viganò  
Apostolic Nuncio to the United States  
3339 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Archbishop Viganò:

We write to you today as elected representatives of a part of Western New York currently served by St. Francis of Assisi School in Tonawanda. We want to make you aware that the local Catholic community and many others in our senate districts are very upset with a decision announced by Bishop Richard Malone of the Diocese of Buffalo on January 15, 2014 to close this 144-year old pre-kindergarten through eighth grade institution at the end of the school year. We would like to join with the advocates who are pressing for a reversal of the decision to close St. Francis of Assisi School, and we feel it is our duty as community representatives to urge your direct involvement in this matter.

Our bishop has already rejected a canon law petition asking him to keep St. Francis of Assisi School open. Now we understand that our appeals must go to a higher authority within the Church. Therefore enclosed you will find a formal summary of just such an appeal being made by parishioners to your office and others in the Roman Curia.

We hope that you will give this matter your utmost attention. St. Francis of Assisi School deserves to remain open for many reasons, not the least of which are increased enrollment, a robust endowment, relatively low tuition costs, unique service to a key geographic area, and widespread community and family support. In sum, we fear the decision to close this school is short-sighted and will leave few options for local residents to provide for a quality Catholic education for their children.

Thank you very much for your attention to this timely matter. To reiterate, we fully support a reversal of the decision to close St. Francis of Assisi School, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with you, the Church, or any interested parties in making that happen.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mark Grisanti in black ink.

Mark Grisanti  
Senator, 60<sup>th</sup> District

Handwritten signature of George D. Maziarz in black ink.

George D. Maziarz  
Senator, 62<sup>nd</sup> District

enclosure