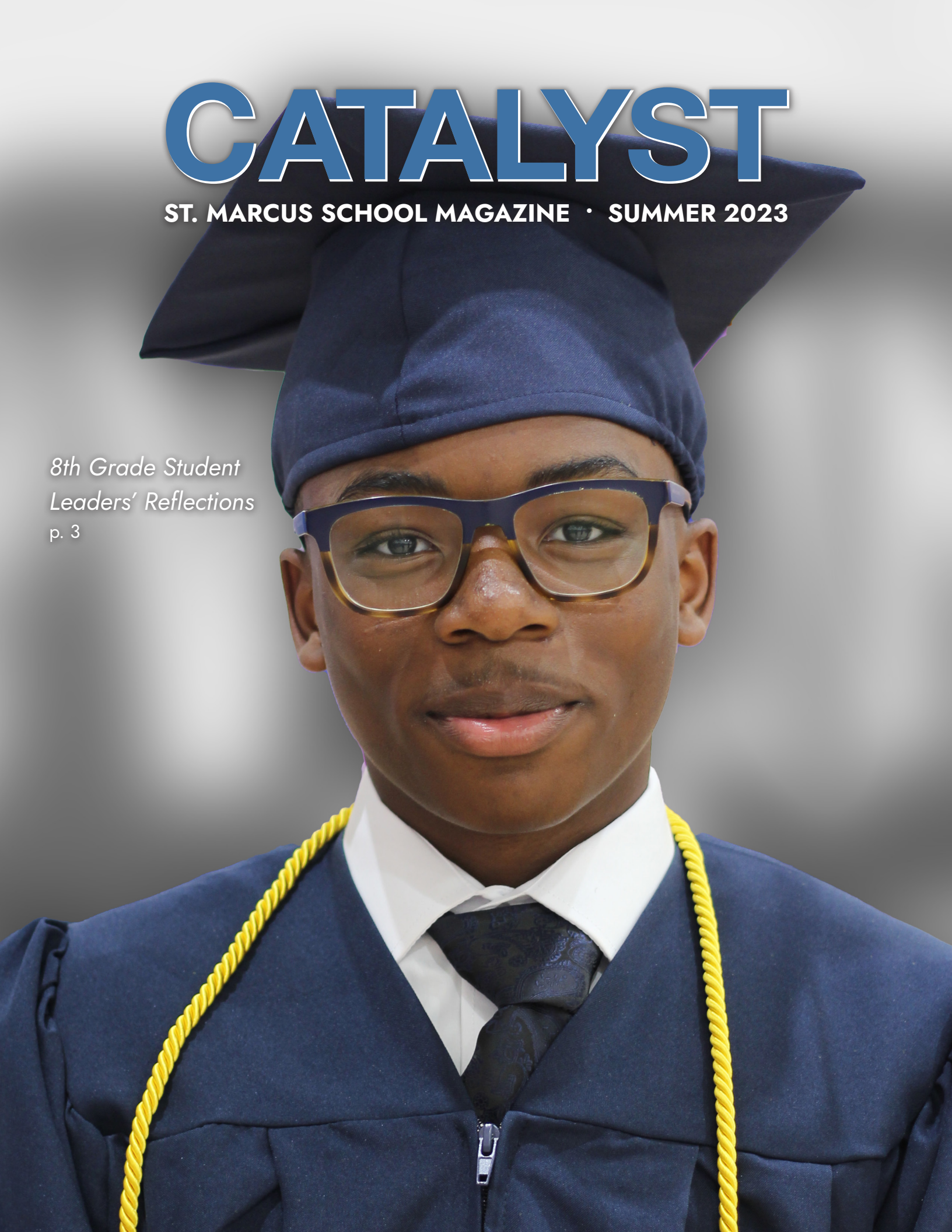


CATALYST

ST. MARCUS SCHOOL MAGAZINE • SUMMER 2023

*8th Grade Student
Leaders' Reflections*
p. 3





Dear Friends,

Over the past six weeks, I've personally been onboarding every new St. Marcus family. We meet in person or over Zoom. The purpose is to give new families the opportunity to accept their scholar's seat only after they

understand who we are, what we believe, and what we expect. Over 95% of the parents who I have met with have accepted their seats!

I ask parents to consider two questions during the meeting. Almost all parents get the answer wrong and gasp when they hear the answers. Let's see how you do.

1. **What percentage of a child's life is spent in school between birth and age 18?** Most parents guess somewhere between 50% and 80%, but the actual answer is 18%. What does this mean? It means that parents are their child's primary educators and influencers. I then go on to share with parents the importance of the responsibility they have to ensure their children's success in school.

2. **St. Marcus is a Five Star School that "Significantly Exceeds Expectations" according to the State of Wisconsin. Based on the state Forward Exam, what percentage of St. Marcus scholars can read at grade level?** Most parents guess somewhere between 80% and 100% but the actual answer is 20%. WHAT?!? Jaws literally drop. Parents gasp. How is that possible?

The fact that St. Marcus is celebrated by the state as a top-performing school and only has 20% of students reading at grade level reveals a seemingly contradictory truth: St. Marcus IS an exceptional school AND we have an extremely long way to go. The work we are doing together is extremely challenging, especially with the lingering effects of the pandemic.

For that reason, we need ALL HANDS IN and we need All Hands in NOW.


Throughout this issue, you will read what it means to have All Hands In.

But let me share what All Hands In looks and feels like from the last two weeks of school. Here are some highlights:

- Two groups of volunteers, some from the church and community and some from Northwestern Mutual, began demolition work for Phase III and Phase IV of our third campus. Two days of volunteer work saved approximately \$20,000 from the construction budget.
- Volunteers came to help at the school's annual book fair which raises money for the school libraries and puts additional books in students' hands and homes.
- Volunteers from Home Libraries 4 Kids were in the school, meeting with scholars and helping them to match donated books with their interests.
- 50 scholars were baptized and 12 were confirmed as a result of the Holy Spirit working through teachers, mentors, and congregation members.
- For the second year in a row, St. Marcus won the State Lutheran Track and Field Competition, beating schools from all over the state. Our volunteer coaches helped to make this possible.
- We learned that 65 of the 68 members of the class of 2019 graduated from high school and that 58% of them are planning on attending a four-year college. Others are joining the military, attending trade school, working, and one is becoming a firefighter.
- Donors rallied around Discover America, investing over \$150,000 so that over 100 students could travel throughout Wisconsin and as far afield as Arizona, Alabama, and South Dakota.
- We finished the 22-23 school year with a total of seven St. Marcus families becoming first-time homeowners.

Truly remarkable things are happening in the lives of St. Marcus scholars, families, and staff members. ALL HANDS IN speaks to the fact that this can't be done without an army of volunteers and supporters committed to pouring into the lives of our families.

Thank you for your partnership and thank you for helping to transform lives one child and one family at a time.

Sincerely,

Henry Tyson
Superintendent

SAVE
THE
DATE

Nov.
11th,
2023



intertwined



ST. MARCUS SCHOOL ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA
For details, tickets, and sponsorships, visit stmarcushgala.com

When you are walking with
Jesus, who will be walking
with her?

You!



By including St. Marcus
in your will, you create a
legacy of love
for our scholars.

Find out more or tell us about your plans:
michele.kitson@stmarcus.org | 414-562-3163x7556

8TH GRADE STUDENT LEADERS REFLECTIONS

written by Regan Parbs, Mission Advancement Team



Becoming a student leader at St. Marcus is a huge honor.

Eighth grade scholars are given the opportunity to apply for a leadership position based on service hours, which they earn through tutoring other scholars, volunteering on flex-Fridays, tidying classrooms and the gym, helping with after school programs, and creating videos and slideshows for Quarterly Awards. They also represent St. Marcus during school tours and community events. By stepping up to serve others, scholars learn valuable life skills and lessons that help shape them into future leaders in their communities and careers.

We checked in with a few of our graduating leaders to learn about their future plans and reflect on their time at St. Marcus.

JAYLA MCCARTER



Where are you going to high school?

Milwaukee Lutheran High School

What is the most important life lesson you learned from St. Marcus that you will carry with you wherever you go?

The most important life lesson I learned was self management. Controlling my emotions and not letting others deter me from my goal.

The theme of this Catalyst issue is All Hands In. When you hear the phrase All Hands In, what does it mean to you?

When I hear the phrase "All Hands In", it reminds me of working as a team. Treating everybody the same because we're all children of God.



JOSHUA WILDER

Where are you going to high school?

Marquette University High School

What is the most important life lesson you learned from St. Marcus that you will carry with you wherever you go?

To represent yourself as best as you can, wherever you are. My school continuously taught me to represent myself the best that I can because I never know who could be watching.

What are your aspiring dreams beyond high school?

After college and medical school, I aspire to become a neurologist.

DELANO GLOVER



Where are you going to high school?

Rufus King High School

What is your favorite memory at St. Marcus?

My favorite memory is when I became a student leader. It showed that I can be an overachiever in school.

What are your aspiring dreams beyond high school?

My dream is to become a NBA legend on the Milwaukee Bucks and after that a NBA coach. This dream would give me the opportunity to represent my hometown and find new ways to give back to the community.

CAMREN SMITH



Where are you going to high school?

Dominican High School

What is your favorite memory at St. Marcus?

My favorite memory from St. Marcus is the 4th Grade Camp Phillip trip.

The theme of this Catalyst issue is All Hands In. When you hear the phrase All Hands In, what does it mean to you?

To me, it means that everyone must put some kind of effort in, because if one teammate is down, then we are all down.



NASIR NELSON

Where are you going to high school?

Pius XI High School

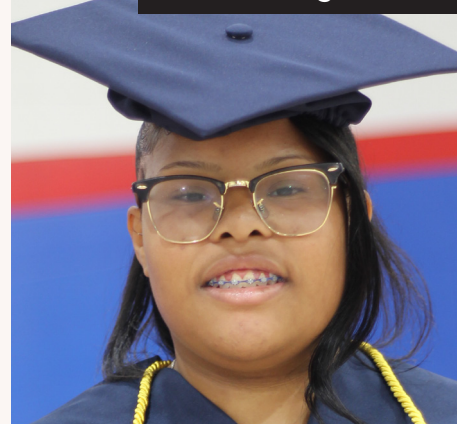
What does being a student leader mean to you?

What being a leader means to me is having a voice for those who are still trying to develop their own and providing them with courage to break out of their shells.

What are your aspiring dreams beyond high school?

To pursue a law degree and possibly become a lawyer.

KENNEDY JEFFERSON



Where are you going to high school?

Nicolet High School

What is the most important life lesson you learned from St. Marcus that you will carry with you wherever you go?

Don't be afraid to fail because failing is the best way to succeed, and if you ever face a challenge, seek help from others, but always first seek answers from God.

What does being a student leader mean to you?

Being a student leader means standing out in a good way. It means doing the right thing even when no one is watching. Being a leader means to help your peers who need help and not to judge others. It also means to stand up for the little guy.





JEREMIAH 29:11

**FOR I KNOW THE
PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,
DECLARES THE LORD,**

**PLANS TO PROSPER YOU
AND NOT TO HARM YOU,**

**PLANS TO GIVE YOU
HOPE AND A FUTURE.**

A LABOR OF LOVE

written by Cecilia Davis,
Mission Advancement Team

Since opening its doors in fall 2021, the St. Marcus School Campus on Burleigh Street has flourished as a vibrant learning community, currently serving more than 200 scholars in K4-3rd grade. The campus will welcome 4th graders this fall as additional renovation and construction continues. Ultimately, this 80,000 sq. ft. campus will provide more than 600 K4-8th grade scholars with a high-quality, Christian education.

It's hard to believe that this campus has already completed its second school year! While much of the building has already seen a stunning transformation, there is still work to do to prepare the remaining spaces for this growing campus. Beginning this summer, St. Marcus is introducing an exciting opportunity for YOU to help us accomplish this critical work.

We're excited to launch All Hands In, a new initiative that engages volunteers for hands-on, service-learning work days to help transform unfinished spaces into state-of-the-art learning facilities.



Northwestern Mutual volunteers on demo day

All Hands In will welcome volunteers this summer and throughout the 2023-24 school year. This initiative also includes opportunities for financial support through sponsorship packages.

If a group from your business, church, personal network, or any other organization is seeking a unique and meaningful service-learning, team-building experience, All Hands In is a perfect opportunity! Work days can be customized for your group and include light to moderate tasks such as debris removal, demolition, furniture assembly and relocation, and room cleaning. Volunteer workdays are supervised by St. Marcus staff members. No special skills are needed, and tools and safety equipment are provided.

Superintendent Henry Tyson will also lead a discussion for your group about the challenges and opportunities facing our scholars and families, schools, and the community in Milwaukee's central city neighborhoods.

All Hands In saw a robust start this spring with volunteer groups on-site on May 11 and 13. The May 11 volunteers included a crew of St. Marcus church members, as well as a team from Northwestern Mutual. Thomas Rosenthal, Assistant Director of Philanthropy Programs at Northwestern Mutual Foundation, was one of the volunteers (pictured above, second from the left).

"Northwestern Mutual is thrilled to be part of this effort," he shared. "These volunteer work days give our employees an opportunity to roll up their sleeves and make a meaningful, tangible impact."

We'll bring the hard hats—you bring the heart!



Northwestern Mutual's combined investments of generous financial support to the capital campaign and employee volunteerism help realize its philanthropic vision for St. Marcus and for education in Milwaukee as a whole.

"Long-term investments in our partner schools' students are crucial for our city's future," Thomas adds. "Our pipeline strategy looks at how we can keep a hand on students' shoulders throughout their entire educational journey, even through post-secondary schooling to career introduction. Part of this includes helping high-performing schools like St. Marcus offer more seats through expansion."

And more high-quality seats are exactly what Thomas and his volunteer team will make possible. On their volunteer day, work concentrated on the space that will ultimately become the campus' motor skills room for our youngest scholars.

"It was such a feel-good project!" Thomas recalls. "And what's even more meaningful is the knowledge that our work made an actual, tangible difference."

We all know there's value in volunteerism, but you can't always quantify the impact. Henry Tyson quantified it for us by sharing the actual cost savings of our volunteer work to the overall project."

In fact, the work accomplished by volunteers on May 11 and 13 slashed approximately \$20,000 from the overall project's demolition costs—a sum that can instead fund St. Marcus' critical, core educational needs. Simply put, All Hands In volunteerism directly translates to more seats for St. Marcus scholars.

"We partner with St. Marcus because of its consistent stand-out status as a school that exceeds expectations," Thomas says. "Constant attention to performance and a strong team of educators is part of the 'special sauce' that enables St. Marcus to succeed and expand."

Join our growing community of All Hands In to transform learning spaces that will transform lives! We'll bring the hard hats—you bring the heart!



To learn more about sponsorship opportunities and/or service-learning workday opportunities for volunteer groups, contact the Mission Advancement Team at 414-355-1506 or allhandsin@stmarcus.org.

WELCOME HOME!

written by Sara Roemer, Mission Advancement Team

Colette started her journey with St. Marcus in 2019 when she enrolled four of her seven children. She was looking for an excellent education for her children but never imagined the community engagement programming at St. Marcus would lead her to build and own her own home.

“I met with Moe (St. Marcus Life Coach) a couple of times early on because of some hardships I was having, but never fully engaged.” After Colette saw a news segment about the financial literacy workshops St. Marcus was hosting and Moe’s work with other parents, she decided she needed to get further involved.

Colette started meeting with Moe in 2021. They worked together on her finances, created a budget, and got her on the right track financially. “When we started going through my finances, it made me want to change for the better. Moe was very encouraging and told me I could do it! It gave me the courage to want to reach my goals!”

Homeownership was one of those goals. Colette applied with Habitat for Humanity at the encouragement of Moe and got accepted in the spring of 2022. Over the past year, Colette has helped build her home as part of the Habitat program.



Colette & Moe working on the home

Between her full-time job at St. John’s on the Lake and caring for her children, she spent eight hours every Saturday at the house, working on things like drywall and painting.



“You have to get dirty when working with Habitat. It’s a job! You are putting in the time to build your walls and help others build theirs. You start to build relationships with others going through the same things you are.”

“It is literally what All Hands In means to me. It’s a push. Each one, reach one. Knowing that I had the support of so many, whether it was from another Habitat homeowner, volunteers from churches, or sponsor organizations, there were so many people that were part of building my home. Not everyone has a support system or family members that can help in this way. When others push me and teach me about the positive things around homeownership and building generational wealth, it makes me a better person.”

On top of that, Colette worked at Habitat’s ReStore as part of the program, volunteering at the resale shop.

“It has been a great experience for me and my kids. My kids were there and watched me build our home. It gave us something to live for. We now take pride in it, which has given my kids a better sense of what “home” really means. I am so grateful to St. Marcus and everyone who has made this dream a reality.”

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

“I admire this woman so much. She managed her full time job, countless volunteer and sweat equity hours with Habitat and being an awesome mom to her kids...She did it for her kids and I’m so proud of her for overcoming all of the obstacles that came her way to make this dream come true. Colette is one of the many St. Marcus parents working hard to achieve their goals. I love that I gained a new friend in Colette. I love my job. I love St. Marcus and everyone who pours into it to change lives.”

—Excerpt from a Facebook post by Moe

After a year of work on the home, Colette and her kids officially moved in on March 23.



Today, Colette stays focused on her favorite Bible verse, Philippians 4:13, ***I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*** She’s now working towards her next goal of opening her own daycare!

Because of the generosity of St. Marcus donors and partner organizations, parents like Colette experience financial stability and are empowered to reach their goals.

Congratulations, Colette!

“EACH ONE, REACH ONE.”



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St. Marcus is a Christian, high-expectations choice school serving students from grades K3 to 8th.

Using a proven urban education model, St. Marcus seeks to instigate change and provide a community of learning where children and families live, grow, and thrive.

St. Marcus' driving vision is that every family has access to excellent education in the city of Milwaukee.



[STMARCUS.ORG/SCHOOL](https://stmarcus.org/school)

