

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Responsible GOVERNMENT

## St. Aloysius invests in good maintenance

For more than ten years, the Pottstown School Board has been grappling with the fate of its five neighborhood elementary schools.

Several plans (costing from \$39 to \$53 million and since discarded) involved closing schools, adding to existing schools, or building new ones. All called for major "shut-it-and-gut-it" renovations.

Perhaps the school district can learn something from the St. Aloysius Parish, which boasts the oldest elementary school in Pottstown — a lovely 1912 brick building on Hanover Street which retains its original historic character.

The school enjoys bright, airy classrooms with big windows. It houses a kindergarten in the basement (which has windows) and grades 5 through 8 on the first and second floors. A second building was constructed in 1961 behind the church on Beech Street which houses the library and grades 1 through 4.

Neither school has had major renovations, but each has been extremely well maintained. Mechanical-electrical systems have been upgraded as needed.

In recent years, the parish has installed high performance replacement windows in both buildings. The windows in the 1912 building are designed to match the size and style of the original windows.

Unlike the Pottstown School District, the parish can't just raise taxes to cover increasing costs. It has to spend wisely. St. Aloysius has found energy-saving maintenance improvements like new windows to be a good investment.

A sensible maintenance plan, rather than major construction, will serve the Pottstown School District equally well.

*This column expresses the personal views of Tom Hylton and does not represent the views of any public or private organization with which he is affiliated.*



Commentary by  
Thomas Hylton

### Summary

**The St. Aloysius Elementary School complex contains two classroom buildings: the original school on North Hanover Street, built in 1912, and a school on Beech Street built in 1961.**

**In recent years, the parish has installed architecturally compatible, high performance replacement windows in both schools.**

**School officials say the windows have improved the appearance and comfort level of the classrooms. They also reduce energy consumption.**

