

September 30, 2009

Dear St. Richard's Families and Friends,

With our first full month of classes coming to a close, I am pleased to report that the beginning of our school year was one of the smoothest openings that I can remember in my 30+ years of doing so, and numerous members of the St. Richard's community echoed the sentiment. I must thank our faculty and staff for the hours of time spent prior to our first day to ensure that classroom preparations were complete for August 19.

Thanks to the efforts of the 2008-2009 Safety Committee, the first day arrival and dismissal procedures were seamless and now run like clockwork. We appreciate your continued attention to the safety of our children.

Student documentation forms mailed over the summer have been returned, with the exception of a few, and the office staff now has appropriate emergency information and other student documentation available as needed. While this is a tedious process, we appreciate your assistance in helping us readily access important information.

Very shortly after our start, H1N1 quickly caught our attention and put us on alert for possible widespread illness. Thanks to the work of our administrative team and Drs. Garau, Root and Shea, plans were put in place to handle the implications of the virus. While a few of our students did become ill, we have managed to prevent the spreading of the flu thanks to procedures here and your diligence at home.

Walking into the school building, one might have noticed some renovations and additions, with an open office area and additional seating and enhancements. A huge thanks is to be extended to Alex White, current SRS parent, for connecting us to Dick Oakes, president of Business Furniture. Mr. Oakes graciously donated lobby and office furniture to St. Richard's. "Finishing touches" were put in place with the creativity of former SRS parent, Casey Cronin, of Casey Cronin Photographer. His gracious donation of student portraiture is noticeable in several areas of the school. Also, a professional protective cover for our family map was created and installed by parent Ron Roessler and is greatly appreciated, particularly by Melinda Fisher and Michele Young, who spend hours precisely updating the map each year.

Recently, Educational Records Bureau (ERB) consultant Ann Harris came to Indianapolis to work with parents and staff regarding our testing program. I was delighted to pick up Ann at the airport and have her ask me, "Do you realize how well your students score on the Comprehensive Testing Program 4 (CTP4)?" This was definitely music to my ears. She reviewed the overall testing process with parents and also did a quick refresher course with the staff, highlighting the new online requirements for the administration of the test in the next two

years. Additionally, several staff members spent a full day beginning a thorough review of our 2008-09 test scores and also reviewed a random sampling of previous scores. In essence, her findings, along with that of the staff, indicated that our students' scores are very strong in comparison to those of other independent schools nationwide. The staff will continue this work during our Professional Development Day in October, and additional information will be forthcoming to you as it is interpreted. By and large, we are seeing impressive overall growth from year to year within our student population. We have much to be proud of and to celebrate.

As promised, the staff has begun the work of assessing our mathematics program. This process will complement the textbook adoption cycle determined by the state of Indiana. Textbook reviews, parent and alumni surveys and student testing will be used to guide future curriculum decisions. A recent presenter gave insight into the current Everyday Math Program, and a Math Night is planned for January. As you can see, math is certainly going to remain at the forefront of our discussions this year!

In our development office, much progress is being made with alumni engagement. Our Director of Development and Alumni Affairs, Michelle Rhodes,'97, and student intern Elizabeth Presson, '98, have connected SRS to our alums, families, and friends through Facebook. They are successfully recruiting class agents to assist in keeping former students connected to St. Richard's School. Not only are we working through Facebook to connect, but also several "old-fashioned" face-to-face connections are being made through the Foundation Board. Socials have been hosted to celebrate the current good works of SRS with past members of the school community. People are enjoying the contact with their "beloved school."

Hats off to Suzann Lupton and a large cadre of volunteers who have spent hours crafting our 50th anniversary celebration. The celebrations will begin with a kick-off at Regalia 2010. A well-planned series of events will honor the efforts of Father Lynch and Trinity Church as founders of St. Richard's School. Many fun-filled, nostalgic events will take place during the next year to honor our school. Stay tuned!!

And if we aren't busy enough, it has become more and more apparent that our students are entering the world of social networking, and we must be prepared to guide them as it relates to our school environment. Mrs. Lausch has engaged a diverse group of educators, parents and students to begin the work necessary to keep our students and families appropriately knowledgeable about this phenomenon. The committee will examine and consider policies for social networking as it applies to the school setting and relationships between St. Richard's students. You will be kept informed as this group completes its work.

While everyone has their own personal reasons for selecting St. Richard's for their child's education, a common theme that rises to the surface is the type of graduate we produce. St. Richard's students learn from an early age to take responsibility for their own education. We develop students with time management skills, public speaking skills, the ability to think

critically, the compassion and understanding of persons with different backgrounds, and an enthusiasm for learning that will last them the rest of their lives. We would like to request your help recruiting other families to experience SRS by inviting them to our Admission Open House on Thursday, October 15th from either 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. or from 5:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. Research shows that our best tool for recruitment is YOU!! Please let your friends and families know about our wonderful program.

I hope this glimpse of our new year further acknowledges all the exciting efforts that are ongoing at St. Richard's School. It is our goal to position St. Richard's for the next 50 years with an even stronger presence than ever before!!! And as always, thank you for sharing your children with us.

With warm regards,

Patricia Swenson

Head of School

St. Richard's School