

Hello everyone, I hope that you are having a glorious summer!

Within the next few weeks, the school will be bustling with excitement as the new school year begins. We have so much to be grateful for, but especially for each and every one of you, our amazing families! I'd like to give you a glimpse of just a few things that will be happening in our school this school year, and I invite each and every family to search for a way to help our school continue to grow and thrive.

First, here is a series of opportunities that I would like to invite you to be involved in within our school.

1. Pray regularly for the success and growth of the school.
2. Volunteer to help at the school for an event or volunteer on a regular basis if you are able (lunchroom, kitchen, recess, library, coaching, etc.).
3. Offer financial support to the school at any point throughout the year beyond tuition. Perhaps your place of employment has a matching gift program that could benefit the school.
4. Share your expertise with our students – i.e. classroom presentation on your work or hobbies.
5. Join a school board committee (School Finance, School Development, Enrollment, Facilities, or Executive Board).
6. Attend and/or help plan events sponsored by the school throughout the year (3-on-3 tournament on Nickle Dickle Day, school liturgies throughout the year, school gala fundraiser, golf tournament, etc.)
7. Contact the school office for information about any of these opportunities or to offer support in some other manner.

Secondly, I invite you to invite your friends, family, and neighbors to check out our school. We have families from Waconia, Chaska, Victoria, Watertown, Mayer, Cologne, Norwood - Young America, Minnetrista, St. Boni, Silver Lake, New Germany, Howard Lake and beyond. Please, help us spread the news about our wonderful school.

Later this summer/fall we will be expanding our school playground. Through generous donations from school and parish families along with several grants that we have received, we were able to purchase additional equipment for the playground including a swing set, a zip line, and a few other features that students requested. We will stretch the play area to the east and south fence-lines, and we will be replacing the mulch under the play equipment. Everything for the playground expansion has been ordered. However, as with most industries right now, there is a backlog on orders, and we are awaiting delivery of the equipment. When all of the equipment arrives, we will be doing a community build – if you are interested in helping with this, please contact the school office. We will keep you informed on the progress of this project.

I am super excited to let you know that St. Joseph School has been accepted to complete a process that will make us the first school in the northern part of the country from Chicago to the Pacific Ocean, to receive a National Campus Certificate in STEM Excellence. We have not yet earned this certificate; however, we will begin the process of certification in August of this year and will complete the certification by June of 2023. Our teachers are so dedicated to our students, and they are always looking for the next 'best way' to serve our students. This is just one example of how they are willing to do whatever it takes to embrace excellence. We will keep you abreast of our progress throughout the year.

Finally, I am excited to announce that we will host one of our bishops for a school Mass and school visit this school year. This hasn't happened in over 10 years! The actual date for this visit has not yet been set, but when it is set, we will let you know. You are encouraged to join us.

Thank you all for your generous support of our school. You are greatly appreciated!

Take a closer step to heaven everyone, and don't go alone,

Bruce Richards

St. Joseph School Principal