

The theme for St. Mary Catholic Schools this year is **SERVANT LEADERSHIP**. The servant leadership attribute that we are emphasizing in the month of December is "**Commitment**". Always be kind to others, and especially at this time of year, take time to be kind to yourself!

Curriculum and Professional Development

Jane Schueller, from the Diocesan Department of Education has pulled together a task force to begin looking at grading and assessment. We reviewed what research tells us about grading and began to develop a diocesan grading statement. This group will continue to meet and work towards standards based grading.

Principals have reviewed summer offerings – mostly program related. It was agreed to offer tuition assistance with "for credit" classes for families who are currently qualified and participating in our financial aid program.

Principals Eleanor Healy and Jill Ahles continue with their visits to schools to look at their Gifted and Talented curriculum. The teaching position for our Aquinas Gifted and Talented program has been posted.

Admissions/Enrollment

Early registration ends on January 31 for the 2017-18 year; there are currently 544 registered. The Director of Admissions and the principals are working on follow-up actions to connect with those not yet registered.

Four "Pastries with the Principal" sessions were hosted recently. The goal was to connect the elementary and middle school principals with current grade school families, and do the same for middle school families with the middle and high school principals. Topics of interest were identified in advance, and attendance was better than in past years.

Fine Arts

Choir teacher Spencer Jones has been working diligently with our students on the *Clash of the Choirs* which takes place this month on Saturday, January 28th at 6:00 p.m. in the FAEC. The competing choirs will sing three selections of their choice -- one sacred, one secular, and one "something else" -- for a panel of three judges. In this Sing Off/American Idol-style competition, the judges will give fun, interesting commentary to each group. Be sure to join us, with our host, Cami Rapson, news anchor from WBAY Action 2 News. Tickets cost \$3.00 in advance or \$5.00 at the door.

Director Hayden Kraus has cast the show *Little Shop of Horrors* for our spring high school musical and rehearsals are under way. A professional puppet for the "plant" has been rented, a new opportunity for our students to put on a high quality show working with professional stage props. As part of the PACs new high school theater program, the PAC judges will also be reviewing this show and giving our students and director constructive feedback. Show takes place March 10-12.

Director Kathleen McCurdy has selected *Godspell* for the middle school musical. Show takes place April 21-23.

ZFAB is creating the 2017-18 budget for the next meeting February 1st at 6:30 p.m.; actively seeking new members.

HR & Staffing

- Search for 2017-18 Gifted and Talented Teacher/Program Director and .5 Business Teacher is underway
- Mental Health Counselor job description is posted for current school year; we have received some inquiries

Business Services: Finance-Technology-Food Service

- Business Services – AHC - health Insurance 1095 Compliance Forms in process
- Tuition – Preparing calendar-year statements for parents for tax purposes
- Technology – top priority – finding solutions for the new technology demands of PLTW
- Preparing for certification for the Lenovo “Self Maintainer” program – in-house repairs and paid by Lenovo
- Food Service – delivery this week of \$16,000 piece of equipment for SMM. Lynn Graves responsible for winning 1 of the 3 national prizes.

Fund Development

New Event Update:

Jumbo Gumbo event is being replaced by a new and exciting event that will include all Zephyr alumni, current Zephyr families and our community. This fun event will be held on Saturday, 11/11, at Waverly Beach. A committee has been formed to brainstorm the details – more people are welcome to help! As Board members, parents and alumni, your event help would be very much appreciated! Tickets to this event will go toward fulfilling a school family’s fundraising fee, but we are also creating a new monthly prize drawing program to offer yet another option to fulfill that fundraising commitment.

Annual Fund Update:

- Current year 16-17 YTD = \$116,000
- Last year 15-16 YTD = \$113,000
- In February we will be conducting a phone-a-thon to reach alumni who have given in the past, but not yet this year.
- In March a second appeal letter will be sent to all who gave last year, but not yet this year.
- Personal meetings, notes and communication continue

Major Gifts Initiative:

- Work on foundation creation continues
- Developing Gift Acceptance Policy

Other:

- Work continues on identifying the SMCS PTO group functions to adhere to audit requirements, along with creating processes to maximize ‘shared need’ and ‘shared resources’ to benefit all schools (that have a PTO group)
- WPCP (School Choice) marketing/communication plans developed and implemented to promote this year’s application process (February 1 – April 20)
- A new (endowed) fund is being established in honor of Mark Constancio to benefit SMCHS students in their service/mission pursuits

Upcoming Events:

- SMME Wines Around the World: February 11
- SME Winter Escape Dueling Pianos: March 4
- Zephyrfest: April 8