

September 11, 2008

Dear Grade 8 Parents,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you back from summer vacation and to prepare you for an exciting year! Grade 8 brings many changes to your children, our students. It is their last year at St. Mary's, they are preparing for the various high school examination tests, completing high school application forms, the much anticipated acceptance letters, and making decisions on where to attend high school. And let's not forget all of these factors are added to studying for 8<sup>th</sup> grade and participating in extracurricular activities. In short, this can be an exciting time but also a stressful time! Please know that my door is open and that I am here to guide the students AND parents during the next 9 months.

The end of year brings much fun – spring dance, class trips, yearbook, class night, and graduation. Unfortunately there are many expenses involved with all of these activities. Below is an approximate breakdown of the expenses for last years graduating class.

<u>Event</u>	<u>Cost per student</u>
*Graduation Night (Caps/gowns, diplomas, etc.)	\$ 75.00
*Class Night	\$100.00
*Yearbook	\$100.00
*Retreat	\$ 50.00
Class Trip	\$125.00

*\*Required*

The cost of the class trip, based on all students attending, can range anywhere from \$100.00 – 500.00. In the past parents and teachers showed preference for two one-day events within close proximity to the school and had discussed the many options. Some attractions that were planned in the past are Sunrise Resort in Connecticut, Boston, Six Flags, a trip to the beach to a graduate's family's house in Mattapoisett, and New York City. I welcome you to share other possibilities.

**On Wednesday, September 24 at 8:00 am there will be a MANDATORY parent meeting in the Library (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of ECC Building) to discuss how these events will be funded.** There are two possibilities. First, everyone pays one fee of \$400.00 and I begin planning. The second requires time, preparation and mandatory involvement by each parent to help FUNDRAISE. In the past fundraising has included pizza sales on Friday's, Election Day Bake Sale, car wash, and car drive. Parent involvement includes ordering supplies, purchasing water or ice cream sandwiches, serving pizza, making fliers, counting money, etc. Please remember the purpose of fundraising is to help to reduce the above fees and in the end there may still be a graduation fee.

Enclosed is a packet of information regarding St. Mary's high school application process. It includes the names of area high schools with their contact information and Open House dates. It is important that you read this thoroughly with your child. In addition, on Friday I will be speaking with the students and if you would like to sit to discuss the options for your child I welcome you to make an appointment with me.

Mrs. Ruggiero and Mr. Paris will be offering a preparation course for HSPT (High School Placement Test). Last year we offered this course after school to guide the students through the examination for Catholic high schools and offered them test taking tips and review in the areas of Mathematics and Language Arts, and familiarity with taking the test. Many of the students went into the test feeling relieved. Please take a moment to review it and if you are interested, return it as soon as possible.

I am looking forward to an exciting year and to seeing you on September 24<sup>th</sup>. If at any time you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Fasano  
Principal Grades 5-8