



**From Jenny Kopf
Director of Admissions and Advancement:
A Review of 2019 and looking to 2020**

Enrollment is strong in our fourth year as a school. We've gone from 99 in year I, to 190 in year II, to 290 in year III, to 320 this year! Our current configuration of students is as follows:

89 – 9th grade
101 – 10th grade
74 – 11th grade
56 – 12th grade

Looking to 2020-21, as of December 10, we have 94 students who have taken the placement test for next year. We anticipate a total of 90-95 freshman, with a probable wait list. **Enrollment for next year will be approximately 340.**

There are four Catholic schools in Baldwin County, and our fates are tied together! Their success leads to ours, and our success drives enrollment backward to them! For these reasons, we are making every effort to partner with Christ the King, St. Patrick and St. Benedict in our advertising, where ever possible. We're doing this in 5 ways this year:

- Recognizing our graduates who attended Catholic elementary schools. We had posters displayed this summer at St. Michael and all 3 elementary schools.
- Hosting our annual 8th grade preview day with all 3 partner schools sending their 8th graders to our campus for a morning of classes, games, talks with student ambassadors and a nice lunch. It's a fun day for all of us!
- We created a T-shirt with logos from all four schools, and we've been giving them away at middle school football and volleyball games.
- We are working together on future ads in local publications that will showcase our students from high school – elementary school.
- We will be recognizing our Duke TIPS students from the partner schools by holding a breakfast for them and their parents in January.

We held our Open House on November 6 and had a great turnout with a new format of parents/students getting to choose some different classes to attend and meet some of our faculty. Everyone gathered back in the gym to hear from several of our student ambassadors who provided different insights on several topics. We ended the evening with our band playing the fight song and everyone singing the Alma Mater!

In advancement, we are honored and humbled at this community's generosity, most recently reflected in the success of our **"Bringing our Cardinals Home" campaign which raised \$5.1 million!** These pledges will be collected over a five year period.

Our Annual Fund was rebranded this year to be called the "Cardinal Fund." This important fund allows us to continue to be competitive in recruiting, hiring and retaining outstanding faculty; it also supplements our financial aid program. We held a cocktail party for all parents and the community at the Fairhope Yacht Club on October 9, where parents could hear from John & Jen Blanchard, our Cardinal Fund Chairs. To date we have raised just over 70,000, with a goal of \$250,000 (which includes Gala revenue), so we have some work to do! **We hope our parents and community supporters will continue to be generous to allow us to ensure our faculty and financial aid program thrive!**

Our Guardian Angel program, inviting mostly older Catholic parishioners to become "guardian angels" for our current families, continues to thrive. Through this program, we disbursed \$87,266 of aid to 25 students this year. The year before we disbursed \$56,255 to 17 students. To date this year, we've raised \$75,000 of Guardian Angel monies. We pray that donors will continue to be generous!

Because of the success of the Annual Fund and Cardinal Fund, coupled with the health of our school's operations, we were able to give just over \$500,000 of financial aid to our families this fall. That's extraordinary!

As we look to 2020, we have our traditional annual grandparents day luncheon on Friday, February 14, 2020. It is a great day for our students to share lunch with their grandparents. Next, our 4th annual spring gala on March 28, 2020 – Cardinals in the Courtyard! This event is truly a community gathering for our families and supporters of St. Michael! Our committee is hard at work to bring together an evening of fabulous food, drink, live music, silent/ live auctions and fellowship! We hope you will mark your calendars now to attend and enjoy the evening, all while raising money for our Cardinal Fund! We also hope to advance legacy giving to St. Michael—the chance for people to make a transformational difference in the future of our school. Mr. Weber and I are working on several initiatives to that end.