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August 31, 2020

Dear Parents:

Summer is winding down and the 2020-2021 school year is upon us. 2020 will be a year none of us will ever forget. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed all aspects of education, but St. Benedict School is committed to opening five days a week and providing a high quality, Catholic Education for all of our families. Our steering committee, led by our Vice Principal, Mrs. Christine Keeling, has worked tirelessly to ensure the health and safety of all of our stakeholders. All of us are extremely eager to open our doors and have our classrooms full of the special students we have missed so much.

Our maintenance and instructional technology staff have spent countless hours installing new equipment and tools to make our campus as safe as humanly possible. All students will have their temperature taken at specially designed kiosks upon entering the building. Many classrooms have cameras installed allowing SBS to stream live, real-time lessons. Individual barriers are being affixed to every desk to provide an extra layer of safety for our students. Finally, each class will have their own, dedicated outdoor space to learn outdoors. St. Benedict School is ready for school to begin.

We have had a lot of staffing changes this summer, and we have hired talented, energetic, and compassionate educators to join our team. This year our EDP program will be directed by Mrs. Jeannie Mauro. Mrs. Mauro has years of experience in the afterschool program and is an obvious choice to lead the program into the future. We would like to welcome the following teachers to the St. Benedict Faculty: Mrs. Lorraine Miccoli (PreK3), Mrs. Jennifer Keane (1st Grade), Ms. Rebecca Deliman (3rd Grade), Mrs. Marisa Campasano (5th Grade), Mrs. Nicole Doherty (5th Grade), and Mr. Nicholas Fourniadis (7th and 8th Grade Social Studies). Two new full time aides were also hired to assist in PreK4 and First Grade; welcome Mrs. Jeannine Susi and Mrs. Leilani Jansen. Finally, we have one final and very important addition, especially in these difficult times, our new nurse: Ms. Michele Lesak. She has already provided valuable insight and expertise on dealing with and preventing COVID-19. We are truly excited about these new additions to our already stellar faculty and staff.

I wanted to make you aware of some key dates for the start of the school year. Students orientations will begin on Tuesday, September 1st and run through September 3rd. Please follow the new drop off procedure and schedule that was emailed last week. Orientations will end at 11:00 AM. The first day of school for grades Kindergarten through Eighth Grade will be Tuesday, September 8th. Dismissal is at 12:15 pm for the entire first week. Hot Lunch will be available for students in Aftercare. Pre-K will conduct their orientation on Tuesday, September 8th starting at 9:00 am and formally begin their school year on Wednesday, September 9th.

I am eager for your children to breathe life into our hallways. The pandemic has forced St. Benedict School to change many procedures in order to adhere to State protocols.

**No classes will be or can be changed.** They were carefully heterogeneously grouped and structured to accommodate both virtual and traditional students and address safety, social distancing and NJ State guidelines. I am confident that all of you understand my rationale for NOT allowing any class changes.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to St. Benedict School.

Kevin Donahue  
Principal, St. Benedict School