



March 18, 2020

Dear SJCA Community,

You have entrusted SJCA with the sacred duty to provide an education for your children. That mission is now interrupted and as Chair of the Board of Trustees, I am compelled to communicate a few things to you with regard to our current situation.

1. **We are all working collaboratively to do what is best for our community.** I have participated in several calls directly with Bob Freund, as well as conference calls with the executive committee of the Board, to ensure we are all doing what we can to continue to provide appropriate learning opportunities for our student body.
2. The Board of Trustees has total confidence in our school leadership. Bob Freund, Matt Rizzo, and Kerstin Santarelli have been working tirelessly to continue to do what is right by our students. As a father of two children in the lower campus, I can speak directly to what Mrs. Santarelli has been doing to continue the message that has been given to those students on a daily basis. Whether it is a live reading of a book in the morning or at night, or her recorded message via YouTube, she has been very creative in trying to stay in front of, and engage students. **I also know firsthand that Bob, Matt and Kerstin, along with department heads and our technical support team are working very hard to roll out virtual learning capabilities by Monday, March 23.** Our teachers and teachers' aides have been constantly communicating with our administrative team, and their fellow teachers to collaborate on ideas to continue to push to our community to keep students active and learning. We are blessed to have the faculty and staff that we currently have. Their efforts have been and continue to be a true testament to what we want SJCA to be. Teachers, you cannot be thanked enough. Your efforts are appreciated more than you know.
3. While nobody could have foreseen the current situation our country is in, the foresight, vision and investment in technology by the board and our leaders has SJCA well positioned to adapt to a virtual learning platform. As our team works to get to this point, there may be some reboots needed as part of the process. **At all times the best interest of the students, your children, is in the forefront of everybody's mind.**
4. Our hourly office staff, custodial staff, and maintenance staff should also be applauded for their efforts. The efforts that have been made to continually clean our facilities, disinfect our facilities and make sure our buildings are ready for the resumption of school has been tremendous. The board is committed to doing our part, and as such, hourly staff will continue to be paid during this trying time. **We are committed to our staff and will continue to do what is right by our families and employees.**

5. SJCA is a resilient community, we are a resilient family. Any time there is a challenge or uncertainty, our family always steps up to that challenge, and we always push through. The Vitkus Family is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of students in the SJCA community, and there is a reason for that. It is with our continued spirit and resolve that we will get through this crisis, and, in some way, we will be better for it on the other end. It goes without saying that everyone, in some way, is making a sacrifice to send your children to SJCA. Without students, we have no SJCA family. Your students, and the tuition that you pay, allows us to make commitments to our staff because we have the trust, commitment and support of our families. **We thank you for the sacrifices that you make, and we thank you for entrusting your children to SJCA.**

St. Joseph Catholic Academy always rises to the occasion. Now, more than ever, we need to stick together, pitch in when needed, and all do our part to make the most of this trying time. *“Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:19.*

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for your support, prayers, and patience. And a resounding thank you to the faculty, staff and administrative team of SJCA. Together, WE ARE ONE.

Kyle Vitkus,  
Chair, SJCA Board of Trustees