



Dear SJCA families, students and staff,

This week, the St. Joseph Catholic Academy community has been at its very best, acting with a selflessness that exceeds all expectations. I have been so very humbled by the many ways, both great and small, that our school family has provided support, comfort, wisdom and true charity during these unprecedented times. These moments, gestures, decisions, and kindnesses are what make the SJCA family unique. I want to express my deepest gratitude to our entire community for all that you have done and all that you continue to do.

- On Tuesday night, the Executive Committee of the SJCA Board of Trustees held an emergency meeting and unanimously decided, on behalf of the entire board, to continue to pay ALL employees for as long as this health crisis lasts. **This is an incredibly bold and courageous move for a non-profit Catholic school that relies solely on tuition income, parish support and the generosity of our donors to cover our expenses.** This board decision exemplifies and underscores the spirit of SJCA and our Catholic faith as we recognize, honor, and value those who bless and serve us with their time and talent.
- Due to strong financial management, long term fiscal prudence and sound internal policies, SJCA should be able to weather this storm. **However, we also need the commitment of our families and donors to help see us through.** I truly hope that our families continue to trust us, stick with us and do all they can to honor their tuition responsibilities, understanding that as this crisis evolves, SJCA is providing the best education possible given necessary but ever-changing government dictates and safety mandates.
- **We realize that this is an uncertain time for many in our school community.** Rest assured, SJCA is here for any family with a financial hardship. We have already reached out to Smart Tuition and requested they waive late fees for the March tuition installment. Next week, we will have more information on registration, tuition deposits, sports fees, and other financial matters that are under review. For now, we hope to relieve some stress for our families as we all navigate this situation. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact SJCA Finance Director Jean Fredrickson at jfredrickson@sjcawi.org or (262) 654-8651 ext. 116.
- Our faculty and staff continue to prepare for distance learning. **In all my years as an administrator, I have never seen such extraordinary dedication and collaboration.**
 - Today, members of the Lower Campus staff came together, practicing proper social distancing protocols, and prepared packets for those families of students in grades K through 2 who requested

- mailings.
- Our preschool teachers also delivered school issued laptops to families who need an electronic device for virtual learning. They even added a few packages of diapers for a family with two small children and a new baby.
 - Over the last two days, several Upper Campus departments met virtually and in person, employing social distancing to ensure that both the technology and content are in place to begin virtual learning. Sharing skills, resources, best practices and good humor, our department chairs have led their teams and classes are ready for Monday's roll out.
 - Our principals and administrators have worked nonstop triaging issues, setting priorities and ensuring that our distance learning exceeds both DPI requirements and our own high standards. We know virtual education is new and different. It may seem overwhelming at times for families and for teachers. Do not worry. We are all here to help.
 - Again, we ask for your patience as our teachers utilize new platforms and formats. The majority of our teachers have taught and taken virtual courses, so their confidence and comfort levels are high and they will assess and review as we go.
 - Our maintenance and office staffs always step up, ready for any and all tasks. In this new world order, these behind the scenes workers make all the difference for our school.
 - During this time of distance learning, we will be following our regular school calendar, including the dates for Spring Break, with one exception for middle and high school students: Friday, March 27, 2020 will be a regular online school day. All middle and high students will be expected to attend online school on that day. Lower campus will have the day off.

Finally, today is the feast of St. Joseph, husband of our Mother Mary and earthly father of our Lord Jesus. As St. Joseph looked after and protected his family, please know that St. Joseph Catholic Academy will look after and protect your family and our entire school family. As Pope Francis states: "To form a family is to be a part of God's dream, to join him in building a world where no one will feel alone." Thank you for being a part of our family, for being a part of God's dream and for joining us to build a world where no one will feel alone. Please know that no matter how long this crisis lasts, St. Joseph Catholic Academy is here for you. We are your family, and we promise you that no one in our family will ever feel alone.

Stay safe, stay in touch and please let us know if you need anything.

Best always,
Bob Freund