

St. Mary School

February 15, 2017

Dear Families,

One critical component to our school's overall success is the partnership we share with our families. Often times on display in our daily activities, that partnership really takes shape in the form of our Home School Association (HSA). Indeed, our HSA is both a very *special* and *important* group in our school community. Please allow me to explain:

Our HSA is *special* for many reasons. As we all know, our lives as parents are hectic and we seem to have more responsibilities than ever before. Whether we are off to an appointment, a ball game, dance practice or the next big event, we seem to never have enough "down" time. And still, even with their intense daily schedules, our parents find a way to make amazing and special things happen here at school. We can highlight Turkey Bingo, The Christmas Fair, Catholic Schools Week, our Auction, and the great Carnival among the many events our parents produce for our students. Yes, we have a special group of parents who sacrifice their own time in order to benefit all of our children. And the memories created at these functions last a lifetime, what a gift!

Our parent community is also very *important* to our school's financial health. Each year, our HSA is tasked with raising over \$110,000 to contribute to the school's operating budget (which helps to keep tuition costs low). As you can imagine, this is not a simple task to accomplish. An incredible amount of time is needed to organize, plan and eventually execute the many functions that are planned annually – for this, we are grateful to all of our parents who chair & volunteer at each event!

There are other schools that do not have the many events that we produce at St. Mary School. Instead, they have a high HSA Fee that covers most of their school's fundraising obligations. We, as a school, are slowly transitioning to that model because our parents are busier than ever before and we need to begin to reduce the amount of time that they give to our events and functions. But that transition takes time and cannot be accomplished in one year.

As you can see, our Home School Association plays a vital role in our school. I would like to ask you to consider working on our HSA Board for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year. Board members are responsible for representing our parents, being a voice for our families, being involved with producing SMS events and helping to communicate/announce important school functions.

We would like interested parents to "shadow" current HSA Board members for the remainder of this year in an effort to prepare for the 2017-2018 school year. Your participation will help to ensure that the Home School Association remains an integral part of our school community for years to come. As well, you will follow a long line of SMS parents who volunteered their time in order to benefit all of our children.

If you are interested in discussing "shadowing" for this year and/or positions for next year, please contact me at GViceroy@StMaryBethelCT.org or simply call the Main Office. Thank you for your consideration.

May God continue to bless our families.

Gratefully,
Greg Viceroy
Principal