



August 29th, 2023

Dear Families of Saint Miriam School,

We wanted to welcome you back to this fall term at the school and briefly address the recent modest tuition adjustments and the reduction of pandemic-era discounts.

We intentionally chose to NOT make any increases until the pandemic was over and absorbed the costs associated with pandemic-related costs, COVID prevention, cleaning, staffing, etc. This resulted in a loss of just over \$310,000. Still, we stayed the course to help all families and staff member make it through. This is our *first* increase in almost 6 years even while costs of preschool administration and educational costs have risen dramatically - some 41% with an average increase per institution of 9% per year! We can absorb and rebuild, but obviously not sustain ongoing losses.

During this period, we remained opened, increased staffing, and permitted summer programs throughout this period. We also resisted class closures, full school closures, and the laying off or reduction of our staff team. Even over the summer as our population decreases, we covered all staff payrolls. This was no small endeavor, but we wanted to ensure a full and properly maintained and trained team for this fall under the strong leadership of Ms. Leigh, as Director.

Finally, while a bit late in the year for the adjustment, we decided to wait to balance corporate need against the registrations and overall increases. This took a considerable amount of time, and we regret that we couldn't move more quickly. However, our fiscal year ends July 31st and we needed that information to move ahead.

As in years past, despite this loss, we still have managed to better our facilities with:

- o Deep cleaning the entire facility.
- o Cleaning and disinfecting all carpets.
- o Hiring a new cleaning service to better maintain the facility and the children's safety.
- o Remodeling and updating Playground Entrance for the Undercroft Classrooms.
- o Updating both the Admin and School offices and relocating Cemetery records.
- o Completing the beautiful new Mural.
- o Remodeling Beginners 2 Classroom.
- o Installing new Carpet in Itty Bitty 3 Classroom.
- o Contracting for New Turf on our 'Little's' playground!

Obviously, to remain vital and to accomplish all these goals, we need to maintain a strong funding source. This is why we needed to roll back the pandemic-era discount percentages and instituted a very modest 5% increase in tuition.

As the parish leadership team, we are asking each of you to prayerfully consider the amount of effort that went into avoiding any tuition increases or staff cuts for the last 5 years to allow us all to move into a new season on a strong footing now with only modest changes. As always, we remain open to suggestions for the future of better education for everyone. Throughout the past few years, we made your lives easier by affording a strong educational base to your child (ren) and absorbing a multitude of costs. *We stuck by you. Now, we simply ask you stick by us.*

Welcoming a new school year together,

Monsignor Jim, Pastor
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