

Dear BD Family,

What a difference a year can make! People are making up for lost time. Summer vacations are happening, no more constant emails and video conferences on return-to-school protocols, and we can actually breathe easier without mask mandates.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once mused, "All are needed by each one; nothing is fair or good alone." When Emerson spoke these words, I believe he was talking about community—our need to feel needed, connected, a part of something greater than ourselves. Sometimes we may think we have a community when the people around us believe exactly what we believe, or value only what we value; when they look the same as we look or sound the same as we sound. But it isn't necessarily so.

Last year was a great example how very different we can all be. Similarly, like a band or orchestra that has many different instruments playing at different times with different notes but can play beautiful music together. Many of us respected the roles and responsibilities of the other players, to a give and take. They were committed to harmony, building something much greater than themselves. Bishop Dwenger can be a great orchestra. Each of us has our own instrument to play. We have our strengths and our weaknesses, our likes and dislikes. We all come from different families, experiences, backgrounds, and traditions. When we all work together to build something greater than ourselves—we too can make great music.

A special, heartfelt thanks to our dedicated teachers and staff for being instrumental in making each day positive and productive for our Saints. My heart was touched by the students that made last year's crazy schedules work. So many students conquered the challenges that last year presented, but I am also very aware of the students that struggled. Therefore, I am very excited and optimistic about the 2021-22 school year.

#### **Next Year:**

This year will be an opportunity to focus on all the small things as much as the big things that make Bishop Dwenger a prominent institution. We are currently planning an annual theme that will be used throughout the school year in our prayers, assemblies, publications, and school gear as a constant reminder what makes this BD Family so special. The theme is based on Proverbs 3:6, "***HE will make straight your path.***" More about the theme later!

Please take special notice to the attached electronic information, especially fast approaching upcoming dates. *Complete the Jot-Form before July 20.*

The invoices from our Business Office will be mailed out later than usual due to the major changes with school choice scholarships (aka: voucher). I want to publicly thank our state legislature and governor for approving one of America's most robust school choice scholarship. We have many more families this year that qualify for a school choice scholarship. Please go to our website to find out if you qualify.

Speaking of numbers and finances, our enrollment is the lowest it has been since I have been at BDHS (2004). Unfortunately, our 2021-22 enrollment is currently around 980 students. Please reach out to family and friends who may have thought a Dwenger education was too expensive or unrealistic. Pass along to them the great news about the school choice scholarships. I am hopeful that families who left us due to financial reasons during the pandemic can return. I am committed to make a Dwenger education affordable for all!

Now, to the questions that everyone has been pondering. Will there be social distancing? Will we require masks? One-way hallways? Is Mode 3 an option? Will the cafeteria return to normal? Of course, there may be other questions that you are wondering as you read this letter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I do not address your specific concern(s). We do not know what the future holds for us, so things may change. We will continue to keep communication flowing between the Catholic Schools Office, the Board of Health, and with you. As of right now, the following are our expectations for next year:

- There will be NO social distancing
- Classes/attendance will resume at 100% capacity
- Masks will be OPTIONAL
  - We still have students and staff with compromised immune systems or have not received the vaccine
- Quarantines and isolations may still be needed
- Mode 3 virtual learning is NOT an option
- Lunches will return to the cafeteria
- NO one-way hallways
- Lockers are assigned traditionally
  - Each grade will have their designated hallway (ex: senior hallway)
- We will still need families to monitor and report symptoms and positive cases.

I ask that you continue to support and pray for our school, staff, and families as we head into next school year.

### **Personnel:**

As the case in recent years, there have been changes to our faculty and staff due to retirement and other employment opportunities. The following teachers have served the Dwenger students faithfully and we owe them a debt of gratitude for their efforts:

- Lisa Polhamus....Administration
- Beth Peters.....English
- Kurt Leffers.....Math
- John Bennett.....Athletic Director
- Katie Burns.....Development Director
- Sue Zschernitz....Nurse
- Erin Rethlake.....Special Educ. (St. Mother Teresa Program)

We are grateful for the following people who are joining the BD Family. Please join me in welcoming the following:

- Generosa Sangco-Jackson....English
- Robert Spsychalski.....Math
- Greg Slee.....Athletic Director
- Sara Westhoff.....Nurse

We take pride in our work at BDHS. Forming young people has always been a very difficult business, requiring heroic patience and holy wisdom from parents and teachers alike. Bishop Dwenger is a not only a special place, but it's a rare place. There's a vision and conviction here that has not only allowed this school to endure, but to flourish. What an image! I ask that you pray for faculty, students, and families...that they may be faithful to its founding, followers of our mission, devoted to God, and committed to allowing God's grace to carry us forward in service to His Kingdom as Citizens of Two Worlds.

Very gratefully yours,

Jason Schiffli, *Principal*