

St. Mary School
106 Jackson Street, P.O. Box 780
Fishkill, NY 12524
(845) 896-9561

August 15, 2016

Dear Parents,

I hope this letter finds you well, and well rested! I am always grateful for the time that summer gives us to create new family memories - it is truly a blessing. This is also the time of year when we begin to think about heading back to school.

This year we welcome a new art teacher to our faculty, Debbie Shaw-Appel. You are already familiar with her gorgeous artwork, which has adorned the school windows this past year. Her career began with an education in teaching and she is also an art therapist in an assisted living residence. Please join me in warmly welcoming her to our school community!

A new Spanish teacher will also be joining us this year, because as you may know, Mrs. Gallegos has moved to Ohio. The specific details regarding her replacement are not available at this time, but I will share that person's name with you as soon as I am able.

The school has undergone a few updates this summer. New flooring has been installed throughout the hallways, and the walls, doors and trim have been painted as well. A very special thank you to Father Joe and the parish for completing this project. In the upper hall, Grades 8 and 5 have switched classrooms, enabling Mrs. Spina to utilize the sink for science labs. Thanks to our amazing PPA, the 5th Grade classroom has been outfitted with brand new lab tables and chairs.

The Wappingers Central School District has released the initial installment of the technology SMART Bond dollars (Total allotment: \$72,000), and state-of-the-art Chromebooks have been ordered. The students in Grades 5 through 8 will be the first to use this technology in Language Arts and Social Studies. The next set of Chromebooks will be available to teachers in Grades K through 4, on a rotating basis. The long range plan is to have a set for every class, and that is definitely a priority for us.

Due to your overwhelming enthusiasm, we begin a new after school Drama Program this year, with a weekend performance on our school calendar for April 2017. This is a significant undertaking, and many volunteers will be needed to make it a success. More details to follow.

Our Buddy Benches, which the PPA generously purchased in June, will be blessed by Father Joe on Friday, September 9th. The benches provide an opportunity for the students to be inclusive in their play and to be "instruments of peace" - reinforcing our daily afternoon prayer of St. Francis.

I am humbled and grateful to begin my second year as principal of St. Mary School. I continue my commitment to being helpful and available to our school families. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. Along with the dedicated, hard working and professional faculty and staff, I am looking forward to working with you and your beautiful children during the 2016-17 school year.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, see you on September 6th!

Sincerely,

Barbara Schwiebert
Principal