

Greetings from the Principal!

As it seems to be the weather pattern recently in Chicago, we reach record highs in heat and humidity right when the school year is to begin! The heat however can't suppress the excitement surrounding what has happened since last May and what is to come in the 2014-15 school year and beyond.

Since the 13-14 school year concluded in May, Saint Patrick has been a place of endless activity.

Between March and early July, we hired 9 new faculty members. These new faculty members went through a rigorous, 3-round interview process with our administrative team, department chairs, and in some cases our own students. These outstanding educators, combined with our already incredible faculty and staff, will help your son develop the necessary analytical, critical, and life skills necessary to succeed upon graduating from Saint Patrick High School.

Our 5 year comprehensive and collaborative strategic plan is in its final editing stages and will be shared with our board in late September before it is shared with the larger Saint Patrick community sometime in October. It is a plan that is ambitious, creative, and practical for the needs of the school. We applaud the 50+ faculty, staff, parents, administrator, and board members that participated over the last 10 months.

Our iPad program enters its third year of integration into our curriculum and teaching practices. Next month, we will begin the data gathering process to analyze the effectiveness of the tool that has become a necessity in 21st century education. The data will allow us to determine where we are excelling as a school, where we want to improve, and ultimately who we can collaborate with across the country to seek best practices to support the ever changing needs of our students. We will be seeking input from our faculty, staff, parents, and students so stay tuned...

You may have noticed that most Wednesdays this year are late starts. This is due to the implementation of a Professional Learning Community. So what is a Professional Learning Community or PLC? It is an on-going process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. In essence, our faculty will be meeting to focus on curriculum and assessments to help students achieve their maximum potential as students and learners. The late start schedule gives faculty the much needed quality time to discuss and develop the curricular needs of our students.

The wellness center project is underway. Asbestos removal began at the end of July and construction and reconfiguration will begin in mid-November. We are hopeful to have the project complete by the spring of 2015!

Mr. Dan Eberle successfully ran our first ever online course(s) this summer. He was able to offer two courses, Religion I and II, using a hybrid model of meeting in person with the students as well as web based conferencing. The feedback from the students was overwhelmingly positive. We hope to incorporate more online models in the future.

Mr. Matt Monroe and Mr. Ray Jilek will be moderating our new student council. The student council will be governed by senior representatives, but will have opportunities for freshman, sophomores, and junior to represent each of their respective classes. Student council will absorb the former Shamrock council.

Mr. Joe Smailis and Mr. Andrew Weisenburger will be moderating our new debate team. This is a first time in the history of the school that we will have a team in place. The season will last from the end of September until mid-March.

Mrs. Kim Miculinic will be teaching our journalism class which will produce our school newspaper. The class will begin producing newspapers during the second semester.

Enjoy the holiday weekend with family and friends as it traditionally signals the end of summer. I look forward to incredible 2014-2015 school year!

God Bless.