

Greetings from the Principal...

With first semester winding down next week, I wanted to take a moment to recognize some of the great things that have highlighted a successful first semester.

- Saint Patrick High School celebrated the ribbon cutting for its new Lasallian Garden on Monday, November 17th, in the presence of school, business, and community leaders, including State Senator John Mulroe '77 and Alderman Ariel Reboyras. The 20,000 square foot urban garden, located on the northeast corner of Belmont and Austin, will beautify the Belmont Cragin neighborhood and the Saint Patrick campus while providing a green resource to support the school's curriculum. The Garden is part of Saint Patrick High School's strategic plan for innovation and excellence over the next five years, called Saint Patrick 2020. Others include upgrading the school's athletic facilities, elevating the rigor of academics in the classroom through the use of technology, and strengthening community relationships with parents, alumni, and community leaders to advance the Saint Patrick mission and legacy.
- The next component of the Saint Patrick 2020 plan to be completed will be a state-of-the-art health and wellness center equipped with the latest technology and equipment for physical education classes, team training, and fitness programs. Slated for completion in Q1 of 2015, the center will be a vital resource to Saint Patrick's student athletes, given that 60% of its student body participates in at least one of the school's 34 interscholastic sports teams. The planned improvements include: doubling the facility size from 1,300 to 3,000 square feet; building a new locker room and showers; and installing new exercise equipment, including bikes, treadmills, elliptical machines, and weights.
- On October 17, we launched our new mobile App. The App was developed in conjunction with the goals of the Saint Patrick 2020 strategic plan to, "improve accessibility, practicality, and serviceability of technology to our stakeholders." Since many of the school's stakeholders facilitate much of their communication via smartphone, we hope this new App will efficiently address their need to access pertinent information about the school at the touch of a finger.
- At our Thanksgiving and our Feast of the Immaculate Conception mass, we recognized 22 seniors who had received various college scholarship offers from around the country. Of course, we know this is just the beginning and that many more will be recognized for their efforts as the year progresses.
- Senior Konrad Michalek advanced to the State Cross Country meet this fall. He finished 177th out of 220 runners.
- Our wrestling team is currently off to an impressive 11-0 start winning the Carmel Catholic tournament over Thanksgiving break.
- The basketball team won the Kurland-Schnurr Thanksgiving tournament as is currently 6-0 and ranked #19 by Comcast Sports Network Chicago.

- Kudos to all our students involved in the various art programs. Their work was on display for all to see on November 13 prior to our Jazz concert. It was a diverse collection of work which showcased our student's unique talents and insights into art.
- Our theater department put on two successful plays this semester—Taming of the Shrew and Connecting the Dots. Their efforts were outstanding and we look forward to the spring musical in March, Music Man

We look forward to adding to our list of accomplishments as the year continues to progress. As you can see, we have much to be proud of and thankful for.

Our next coffee with the principal will be January 20, 2014 at 6 PM in the LaSallian Lounge. We invite you to participate in our meeting and discussion.

Before we break next week for Christmas, let me leave you with this prayer:

"Wise men traveled for miles to bring you the first Christmas presents. So may we, too, remember with thankful hearts the love that comes with each present we open. We also thank you for the amazing love you have for each of us, and we thank you for the many gifts that you give us."

Thank you for the gift of your trust in leading our young men. May God bless you and your family this upcoming holiday season.

Jon Baffico