



Good day!
I hope this correspondence finds you all well.

Let me begin by, again, expressing my gratitude to the entire SJS Community for the patience and fortitude you've shown for the past three, grueling months. Our students have persevered! Our teachers took on a new role-even if they were "techies" before, this has been an incredible challenge as they quickly adapted to Distance Learning...and you, dear parents, have survived the many roles you have had to accept: academic facilitator, safety officer, and chef, to name a few-making your parenting job literally 24 hours of care-an exhausting task under the best of circumstances-we all did this while worrying about the health and safety of the world around us. No one could've been prepared for all of the obstacles each of us would face. **We have learned from this experience and continue to be forward-thinking.**

The SJS Community has once again shown your dedication and devotion to our school.

Your latest action of faith is the re-enrollment of your children! We can celebrate that we are at about an astonishing 95% Re-enrollment rate! Nothing says St. Joe's STRONG as much as that number!

So what's been happening...

Our darling Kindergarteners have graduated and are now officially First Graders!

Mrs. Casarella, Mrs. Gilbride and Mrs. Sanz planned an incredible socially-distanced memorable day to honor the rising Kindergarteners! The smiles on the children's and families' faces brought us all to tears.

Hats off to our beloved 8th Graders who will leave us and begin the adventures of high school! We received the news this past Monday that we will be able to conduct the 8th Grade Graduation in our Church with limited capacity. Not expecting this fabulous news, the SJS Administrative Team already had created a Virtual Graduation Video- it will be shared with the 8th Graders upon Commencement. We had also planned a socially-distanced Graduation Ceremony which would've been conducted in our parking lot. Now, we have the joy of an in-Church Mass and Ceremony. We are



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hoping to live-stream the Graduation for all to see! An email with instructions was sent yesterday.

The Best in Class Committee continues to forge ahead with the multiple improvement projects to SJS! Our Inaugural PreK 3/4, the Science Lab and other projects.

Please understand that I recognize the many levels of concerns that we are all feeling. I want to provide you with an update for our Fall Planning.

Of course, the biggest question looming for us is:

What will happen in September?

While I wish as much as you do that I could answer this question with certainty, I cannot tell you exactly what the answer is.

My hopes and dreams are that we open our doors and fully resume in-person instruction with safety precautions in place;

to prepare for different possibilities, I have been studying different models for a “hybrid” program; I have immersed myself in information from the Archdiocese, the CDC and Educational Journals to address the physical, social/emotional and academic needs of our children.

If we are told options for opening SJS are not possible, we will continue Distance Learning, enhanced by the wealth of experience we have just acquired; I assure you that I have not heard that anyone desires this, and we all need to pray that this is not the mandate. Know that I have been learning all that I can from the Archdiocese Blended Learning Experts and of course, from our knowledgeable teachers, to put together a more cohesive plan, should we be mandated to conduct full-time Distance Learning.

We at SJS are preparing for all of the possible scenarios and the hierarchy of authority with which we must comply.

- 1) Governor Cuomo will give us the green, yellow or red light to reopen.
- 2) The Archdiocese of New York has formed a Re-Opening Council- (the letter from Superintendent Michael Deegan was sent to you several weeks ago, and is posted on the SJS Website). This Council is responsible for the interpretation and guidance for Archdiocese schools to reopen safely.
- 3) We fortunately also have the guidance of The Bronxville School District's



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School Physician and School Nurse who will provide additional guidance to ensure the safe reopening of SJS.

- 4) The SJS Administrative Team is working internally to prepare, while awaiting directives from the Governor and the Archdiocese.
- 5) Parents who have expertise in relevant areas are encouraged to share suggestions with me within the context of the given structure.

As this unique school year comes to a close, I wish you a healthy, relaxing, enjoyable Summer!

Rest assured that my unmitigated goal is to make SJS the best school for your children as I consistently strive, in conjunction with the entire SJS Community, to build a learning environment that addresses the development of the whole child- spiritually, physically, emotionally and academically.

God bless you and yours!



SJS STRONGER THAN EVER!

Respectfully,
Mary Ellen Sanchez
Principal, St. Joseph

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