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MARY D. BAIER, M.P.A.



Our world was turned upside down in March by COVID-19. We are still in a pandemic, experiencing its effects. Our schools were challenged in a very short amount of time to adopt and enhance our instructional delivery. Parents became partners with the teachers in the education of their children. School became innovative and receptive to new practices. Our principals led their schools in a new remote environment with great courage and their leadership complemented the stellar work of the teachers whose mission-driven attitude ensured that Catholic education thrived in our students' homes. Our principals and teachers are a people of community, prayer and service that is unwavering even with the many hardships they encountered during this crisis. All were resilient and persevered. Our schools continued to provide meaningful learning opportunities despite the disruptions.

These months saw uncertainty, anxiety and trepidation for everyone. We have mourned the passing of loved ones and friends and so many others who are no longer with us. We pray for the repose of their souls and acknowledge the loss and challenges many are feeling and the sacrifices they have made. This is a very difficult time and it will be our faith and the support of family and friends that will sustain us. We will also keep in our prayers our Bishop, Kevin Sweeney, priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters, principals, teachers, staff, students and families, parishioners, first responders, all essential workers and our nation, impacted by the pandemic, racial intolerance and the inequalities in our society. "I plead with you — never, ever give up on hope, never doubt, never tire and never become discouraged. Be not afraid" (St. Pope John Paul II). We will remain strong. We are a people of hope and faith.

Our summer months afforded us the opportunity to plan for the 2020-2021 school year with great efficacy and a renewed commitment for continuous improvement for both our faculty and students. We cannot prepare to return to normal, but we have envisioned for something different and most appropriate for this unusual time.

"To help children, boys, girls, young men and women and adults to know and to love the Lord ever more is one of the most beautiful educational adventures, for it comprises the Church" (Pope Francis).

We have reviewed our areas of strength as well as areas needing attention. The pandemic has not ended. It has not defeated us, but made us stronger, dynamic and receptive to change. The "new normal" does not need to be thrust upon us, rather it will allow us to be intentional and proactive in shaping our future.