

Principal's Update – October 2009

Dear Parents,

Friday, October 16, 2009

As many of you are aware, the 1st quarter interim grades (marking the mid-point of the first quarter) were emailed* home last week. The purpose behind the interim report is to give students and parents feedback regarding their son's academic performance half way through the quarter. Upon receiving interim grades, students and parents usually experience one of two reactions. Some are pleased with the academic performance thus far, and others may be a bit disappointed. In each case, there are important steps parents can take to help position their son(s) for future academic growth.

In situations where parents and students are pleased with the academic performance, it is crucial to identify the behaviors that contributed to this success. Was extra time spent studying? Did the student make sure misconceptions or misunderstandings were quickly addressed by the teacher? Was the setting at home conducive to high levels of learning? Did the student put forth maximum effort? When performance is successful, it is important for students and parents to identify the behaviors that contributed to that success, in the hope that those behaviors can become habitual; thus positioning the student for continued future academic growth.

In cases where academic progress was not up to standard, it is important to discuss the factors that contributed to poor performance here as well. In many cases, those factors might include poor test/quiz preparation, missing/incomplete assignments, minimal effort put forth, working within a distracting environment, or a failure to seek out curriculum clarifications, when needed. Here, it is also important for parents and students to identify those factors which contributed to poor academic progress, and then to take the necessary mitigating steps.

Should you and your son find yourselves in such a situation, I remind you that you do not have to mitigate those inhibiting factors by yourself. Initially, I would encourage you to have your son reach out to his academic dean, school counselor and teachers. In this way, he can hopefully identify strategies to improve his performance, while simultaneously building the important life-skill of self-advocacy. If your son experiences difficulty reaching out to the aforementioned individuals, I would encourage a parent to initiate that contact. In this way we can ensure that all of us are doing our part to position our students for sustained academic growth.

In closing, I hope all of you enjoy the upcoming weekend, and I ask that you review some of the highlighted information below.

Sincerely,

Jacob A. Conca PhD
Principal

**If you did not receive the interim report card via email, please contact Saint John's to ensure we have your correct email address. Calls can be placed to Mrs. Leah Carni at 508-842-8934, ext 227*

Open Houses: Saint John's will host two Open Houses for prospective students. The first open house is on Sunday, October 18, 2009 and the second open house is on Sunday, October 25th, 2009. On both days, the program begins at 1pm. Please encourage prospective students you may know to attend one of our open houses, so that they may obtain a full sense of all that Saint John's has to offer.

Faculty Retreat: On Monday, Oct. 19, 2009, our faculty will be engaged in the annual Fall retreat. Therefore there is no school for students on the 19th.

Freshmen Parent's Reception: A reception for parents of current freshmen students will take place on Tuesday, October 27th, beginning at 6:30pm in the Manor House. Come and meet fellow parents, while hearing from

parents of our upperclassmen. Freshmen parents interested in attending should contact the Alumni Office at 508-842-8934 ext. 259

Fall Recital: Our annual Fall Recital will take place on Thursday, October 29th, 2009 in Remillard Hall. The recital begins at 7:30pm and will feature various choral and instrumental pieces. All are encouraged to attend.

Entrance Exam: The entrance exam for prospective students is on Saturday, October 31th, 2009. More information on the exam can be obtained through the Admissions Office, 508-842-8934, ext 266.

End of Quarter 1: On Friday, November 6th, 2009, grades for the first quarter will close. First quarter report cards will be mailed (not emailed) home by Friday November 13th, 2009.

Parent Association News: The Parent Association is in need of parent volunteers to assist with many of our upcoming events/functions. Parent assistance with these events is vital. Anyone interested in volunteering for the events below should email Mrs. Edie Swenson at eswenson@stjohnshigh.org as soon as possible. Thanks!

- Open House, Oct. 18 and Oct 25
- Thanksgiving Family Mass and Breakfast, Nov. 26
- Faculty/Staff Luncheon, Mid-December
- Junior Career Night, March 24
- Annual Gala, April 10
- Service Day, May 8
- Parent Forums, 1 in Fall, 1 in Spring
- School mailings, AM, roughly once a month
- Assistance in Alumni and Development office
- Flower Gardeners to assist Grounds crew in spring
- Providing refreshments and baked goods for student productions/plays/events

From The Dean's Office: A reminder: if you son is absent or tardy, parents must call the Dean's office before 10AM on the day of the absence/tardy to inform the school. Furthermore, on the day of return, the student must present a signed parental note to the Dean's office, explaining the absence/tardy. The Dean's office can be reached at 508-842-8934 ext 221.

Raffle Drive: A thank you to our students and families for their part in our recent raffle drive success. The funds generated during the raffle drive will directly support our programmatic efforts here at Saint John's. Thanks to all who contributed to our success!

School Cancellation/Delays/Early dismissal: With the cold weather seemingly right around the corner, it is important to remind all of our **School Cancellation, Delayed Opening, Early Dismissals Procedures.**

Announcements for school cancellation, delayed opening or early dismissal will be made via the following media outlets:

<u>TV</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Radio</u>
Channel 4	WBZ 1030	FM 104.5
Channel 5	WRKO 680	FM 100.1
Channel 7	WTAG AM 580 and FM 94.9	FM 98.9
Channel Fox 25	WGFP 1310	

We will also utilize the Saint John's website, www.stjohnshigh.org, our automated phone call out system and/or our automated email system to notify our school community of a change in school hours. More information can be found on page 22 of the Student and Parent Handbook.

