

Dear Parents & Families:

First I would like to say hello and introduce myself as your School Board President for the 2007-2008 school year. My name is Brian Rawlings; my children Erica (5th) and Kayla (2nd) are in their second year at St. Johns. My son Dallas will be attending next fall. My wife, Tracy, and I are members of St. John Neumann Parish.

Prior to last year's school year we learned of the upcoming transition bringing St. Johns, St. John Neumann and Corpus Christi together for school. Our daughters had spent several years at St. Barts and we were apprehensive but decided that we needed to step up and be leaders for our parish and make the change.

I can honestly say from the heart that we are so happy and thankful that we did so. Our family has felt welcomed from the start. The education at our school is top notch. More importantly continues to be the reinforcement that we get everyday from the students our children interact with, the teachers and staff of the school and the volunteers and parents who put in so much time; that St. Johns provides a Christ centered environment for our children to grow, develop, learn and flourish. Nothing could be more important to us as parents.

Continuing to ensure that our children and all future generations have access to affordable, quality Catholic education is vital for the success of our children and our faith community. We all understand the positive impact that this Christ centered education has on all of us and work hard everyday to give of our time, talents and prayers to our school and our children.

Many parishes and Catholic schools have hit or are approaching crossroads. All over you hear of conversations being held and decisions being pondered as a result of our changing times and economics. I truly believe that our core faith, resolve and love will carry us through these times in our Catholic schools.

Many schools and parish communities have embraced opportunities such as this to look forward, to be proactive, and to secure the future. I applaud our pastors, our pastoral councils and all who have brought us this far to date. These efforts and those that continue will serve us all well as we look to a prosperous future.

Our school board structure under the new constitution is developed as an advisory group – one that will work in concert with school administration, pastoral staff, volunteers and parent organizations to provide guidance, a voice, direction and opinion that is in the best interest of our children and our children alone. While we will have a part in handbook policies and budget development – our purpose is not to be a governing body; but rather to lead by consensus – a consensus of our families, parents and students who care so much and work so hard.

The recent survey was a first step in this continuing evolution and process. It was our intent to gather your thoughts, opinions and ideas. This was not to “take a vote” or make final decisions; rather to see where everyone stands as it relates to some of the important directions of our school. The survey was a tool to help us gauge where we are and where we want to go. There will be other pieces and issues that we must look at as we forge the direction for our unified school and we appreciate and look forward to your honest thoughts and feedback. The board pledges to keep you informed and involved in our processes.

Finally I'd like to again say thank you for opening up your facility; but also for being willing to open up your arms, your prayers and your talents to all children who attend this fantastic school. School names, logos, uniforms are all important pieces of our traditions and heritages; but it truly is what happens within those walls and how that message is carried to our community at large that reflects the real value and power of the Catholic education that is afforded at St. John the Baptist.

God Bless

Brian Rawlings
President – School Board