

August 24, 2011

Dear Parents,

Although I already know many of you, I still wanted to take a few moments to introduce myself to you and give you a brief explanation of my philosophy and approach to education.

This will be my sixth year teaching at St. Peter's. Prior to this, I worked for our parish for 5 years in many capacities, and before that, I taught for 7 years, all in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph Catholic schools. I am a graduate of Benedictine College in Atchison, KS and was born and raised in Dallas, TX. My degree is in English and secondary education, with a minor in Theology. I am certified in the state of Missouri in Middle School Communication Arts, grades 5-9. I have been married for 17 years and have 2 sons, Ryan (12) and Paul (11), who are in 7th and 6th grades respectively. We are also proud parents to Scout, an almost 3 year old yellow lab who is "my girl." Our family loves baseball, cooking out, and spending time with family and friends.

I believe in the education of the whole person – body, mind, and soul and I do not think one can be separated from the others. I value education as a means to enlighten both the heart and mind of students to empower them to be creative, productive, and responsible contributors to their communities. My number one goal for your child is for him/her to be successful. This includes not only meeting academic objectives, but also being happy, confident, independent, compassionate, and trustworthy young people. I can promise you that I will care deeply about your son's/daughter's success this year, and I will do everything in my power to help him/her learn important life lessons along the way.

The best way you can help your child this year is to put the responsibility for success on their shoulders. We expect them to be fully accountable for their work, their belongings, their space, their time, their triumphs, and their mistakes. We will hold the bar high because we know they will rise to the level of expectations set.

That being said, we all have to remember that they are still children. Research shows that the frontal lobes are the last part of the brain to fully develop, and in many cases, are not complete until our early twenties. These areas of the brain are responsible for such important activities as planning, foresight, hindsight, prioritizing, managing time, executing multiple tasks, and problem solving. **Middle school students STILL NEED OUR HELP! Don't shy away from checking that homework is complete, keeping your child on task, helping him/her study for tests, and making sure he/she is keeping up with long term assignment due dates.**

Please do not hesitate to call or email me this year with any questions or concerns. I am looking forward to a great year and much learning with your children.

God bless,
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