

Dear Parents,

August 2011

I hope you and your children are having a terrific summer. We are very busy getting ready for our fifty second year here at Episcopal Day School. We anticipate opening the year with 175 students with up to ten more joining us throughout the year. As usual, most of our new students find out about EDS through you, our parents. We are grateful for this and hope you will continue to spread the word to your friends and neighbors.

Teachers have been readying their classrooms which look great in anticipation of the arrival of our wonderful students.

It's important for you to know that all the changes and improvements we've made over the course of the summer came from following our mission which drives the school and our strategic plan which moves EDS forward, as well as information from the parent survey and staff input. First, our strategic plan which includes the mission, was developed by the board of trustees three years ago, and has goals and completion dates which we follow. It is reviewed at board meetings. Second, parent input from the board survey which parents filled out last spring. Third, teacher and administration input regarding operational issues like calendar, schedule, and curriculum implementation developed in conjunction with the board's education committee.

We have implemented a new writing program from kindergarten to fifth grade which is fully sequenced to build from grade to grade. I'm excited that our preschool teachers are sitting in on the training so they can be aware of what's ahead. The program called Write from the Beginning and Beyond and the training for our faculty was fully funded by our PTA so a big thank you goes to them.

We also have brought in an excellent grammar program for grades three through five from Houghton Mifflin which replaces one which according to our teachers was dated and needed replacement.

We are adding a health and nutrition component to our curriculum which will be taught in science, PE, and guidance classes this year. One of our EDS graduates completed his Eagle Scout project by building a garden for us which will be used in all our classes, and some of the vegetables will be used in our lunch program. Thank you to Richard Palmer, now a Pinecrest senior. We have partnered with Communities in Schools and Sandhills Community College in this endeavor, and EDS is the first independent school in the area to be involved with this. Sandhills Community College is providing mimio training at no cost and teachers will earn two CEU's. CEU's and more training were things that our faculty wanted to make them better teachers. On the nutritional front, birthdays will be celebrated once a month per class with each child's birthday having a special non sugar laden celebration on their special day. In May, we will have two birthday celebrations. One will recognize the regular May birthdays, and the other will be for the students with summer birthdays who in the past were not recognized.

With this mailing comes information regarding tuition insurance. As was the case last year, the cost is 1.5% of tuition between \$58.00 and \$116.00. This program protects you and EDS. Tuition insurance is not required if you are on the one payment plan due in August but is required if you are on the eleven or two payment plan.

Also, information from www.orderlunches.com regarding our lunch program which, begins September 1st, has to be filled out by August 25th if you choose to receive a hot lunch. The after school program will be headed by Cynthia Creque, our preschool teacher. Jan Buynak who has headed the program for three years is stepping down as director but will continue working in the program.

We have received through Deanne Barker, our IT person, and Tracy Corbett eighteen computers which are just a year and a half old through a gift from a police department in Virginia where Deanne has done some work. These will be added to our classrooms for student use. Through our membership with the North Carolina Association of Independent Schools we have joined NCAIS Virtual which enables independent schools in making the paradigm shift to a 21st century learning model. I am in my sixth and last year serving as one of eight directors of NCAIS, and our state organization is the first in the nation to develop a program like this which is now being used in other states through our organization. This program will benefit EDS students in and out of school and faculty as well, as training comes with the membership.

When we exhaust our current supply of letterhead, you will notice that we have a new logo for both letterhead and our tee shirts developed by our marketing committee. We want people to recognize the EDS logo so anything coming from the school or any group within the school will use our new logo and show us in the best light.

As part of my goals for the year, approved by the board, I have appointed a four member advisory council from our staff who will assist me addressing enrollment and marketing issues, helping engage parents at EDS, and implementing the new writing program.

School is just not the same without our students so I can't wait for the returning students to join our great new students and families in late August here at Episcopal Day School. I believe that EDS is a great school focused on the right issues to provide the strong foundation, quality education, and Christian environment which are the keys to our mission as well as in the words of child psychologist, Rob Evans, "preparing the child for the path, not the path for the child". Please drop by for a visit or call or email if you have any questions about this letter. I look forward to seeing all of you on Tuesday, August 23rd if not before.

Warmest regards,

Jay St. John
Headmaster