

October Principal's Message:

October 1, 2023

Dear St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy families,

The staff of SMEC/A is pleased to inform that we are off to a great start to the 2023-2024 academic year. We have welcomed several new faces to our family and would like to extend a thank you to all families that welcomed our new staff at our 'Ice Cream Social – Meet the teacher'. Administration is elated with the hard work and engagement of our staff and students leading to a successful beginning to the academic year.

We are pleased to announce the efforts by our staff in the generation of our School Success Plan in collaboration with the Strait Regional Centre for Education System Improvement Plan. The central focus of the SIP and our school initiatives continue to focus on student well-being and engagement.

St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy is proud of the efforts of our staff and students in our emergency procedure drills throughout our first month of school. We have completed a code 'red' fire drill successfully in outstanding time very smoothly with no major concerns to report. In collaboration with the local detachment of the RCMP we are pleased to report positive reinforcement of our procedures through our code 'blue' lockdown drill, and our evacuation and relocation drill. Students and staff displayed timely, effective, and most importantly safety procedures leading to successful completion. Notification will be sent to families of upcoming emergency procedure drills.

The breakfast program continues to provide healthy options for our school community with the strong support of our learning centre staff and student leadership group to effectively, and efficiently supply options for all community members. SMEC/A was the recipient of an extremely generous donation from an anonymous donor in partnership with Mr. Russ Mayne and the local brotherhood. St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy is very pleased to announce coming soon we will be offering an addition to our lunch time programming for families. Working in tandem with Chartwell's food provider and Strait Regional Centre for Education representatives we will be offering a 'Fresh Food Cart' at a subsidized cost for families. When all components of the Fresh Food Cart are secured, we will inform families of the option menu and associated cost with participation in the opportunity.

Extra-curricular activities are underway providing students with school sport, intramural programming, various clubs, and committees. SMEC/A soccer, and girls' volleyball have begun their seasons with great commitment by staff and students. Intramurals have been very popular and witness strong student engagement. We are pleased to announce a newly formed collaboration with St. Mary's Recreation Department to offer even more opportunities for students. We will continue to inform of newly constructed opportunities as they arise. 'Funky

Friday' continues to be an exciting and anticipated event for our Grade Primary to Grade Six staff and students providing a great start to the finishing day of each week.

Student council elected participants have enlightened the school environment with our first 'Welcome Back Dance' and continue to work on school-based initiatives to strengthen student well-being and engagement.

October brings about a change in weather conditions and we would like to remind all families of suitable clothing for students for outdoor and indoor activities. Changes in weather conditions also bring about sickness and illness. We encourage families to support our educational practice in informing students of essential hygiene practices. Strong hand washing throughout the day, and no sharing of drinks and foods is strongly encouraged.

SMEC/A will continue to practice communication with families though agendas for our younger students, google classrooms, messaging system, and notifications to families. The School Advisory Council has completed its first monthly meeting and is looking to strengthen our community connection with your participation in our next SAC meeting on October 24, 6pm, in person at the school. A reminder notification will be sent prior to the meeting.

We wish all families a great month of October and encourage your continued commitment to our students and school community.

Sincerely,

Trevor MacIsaac, Principal