

July 9, 2008

Dear Parents,

I hope this letter finds you enjoying a more relaxed pace during these warm summer days. Here at the Lower School we are in the midst of ordering instructional materials and preparing the classrooms for the 2008-2009 school year, as we look forward to the opening days of school and the arrival of our students next month.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome our new families to Holy Spirit Prep, and to thank the student ambassadors and their families for arranging opportunities for our new students to form friendships with their classmates prior to the start of school. Your gestures of friendship will help ensure that our new students have a very positive start to the school year.

To update you on some changes in faculty for next year, Carol Dietrich has moved to a third-grade teaching position, and Natalie Walker has been hired as our new kindergarten teacher. Please take a moment to read the bios of these two talented individuals on the school Web site, as well as those of our other talented faculty and staff members.

While on the subject of teachers, our substitute teachers are a group that we rely upon for those rare times when our teachers have to be away from school for professional or personal reasons. If you are interested in being placed on the substitute list, please contact Christie Rumiano in the Main Office to obtain the necessary information. (A teaching degree is not required to work as a substitute teacher.)

During the past school year, Mrs. Smyth and teachers at every grade level researched a variety of math programs to determine what would be most beneficial to our students. After visiting several schools and consulting with mathematics experts here in Atlanta and at the University of Georgia, it was decided to implement Everyday Mathematics in grades K-3 and Harcourt/Holt Mathematics in grades 4- 6 (which aligns with the Holt series used at the Upper School). In-depth information about these excellent math programs will be provided to you during Parent Night on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

The other change in curriculum will be our move to *Wordly Wise* for vocabulary mastery. This is a series that presents vocabulary words both individually and in context, and will be an effective tool to enhance our students' skills in this area.

In anticipation of the start of the new school year, links have been posted to assist you in planning your child's return to school. You will find information regarding the following:

- Opening of school
- Student medical form
- Activity and transportation release form (Please return by August 15<sup>th</sup>, the first day of school.)
- HSPS draft calendar
- Carpool information
- Uniform information
- PE uniform order form
- Grandparent information form
- Extended School Program (ESP)
- Extracurricular activities
- Kroger Plus Learning forms
- Publix cards (will be available on Welcome Back Day)

### **OPENING OF SCHOOL**

#### ***August 15<sup>th</sup>: Welcome Back Day***

- Parents and students are welcome to come to school between 11:30 and 4 p.m. to receive students' homeroom assignments. Assignments will be posted in the cafeteria and main halls. (Students do not wear their uniforms on Welcome Back Day).
- Representatives from the Parent Volunteer Association, Scouts, Spiritual Life Committee, Extended School Program, and other extracurricular programs will be available in the cafeteria to answer any questions you might have, and to help you sign up for the activities that are of interest to your child.

- Parents and children should proceed to your child's homeroom, where you will have the opportunity to meet your student's teacher and collect your child's PE uniform order.
- **Please note that current immunization records must be on file by this date.**

***August 18<sup>th</sup>:***

- School days begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. The earliest students may arrive at school is 7:40 a.m. Upon arrival, students in grades K-4 should proceed to the cafeteria, where they will be supervised until they are escorted to their classrooms at 8:00 a.m. Students in grades 5 and 6 should go to their homerooms in the Intermediate Building. (Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy and should report to the Main Office.)
- \* Please note: On Monday mornings, the 5<sup>th</sup>- and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students will drop off their book bags at their homerooms, and then proceed to the cafeteria for Monday Meeting. This provides a weekly opportunity for our study body to come together as a community for morning prayers and announcements, and also provides us with opportunities to recognize students for their achievements, both inside and outside of school. (Whenever we are off on a Monday due to a holiday, we will meet on Tuesday of that week.)
- Kindergarten and Pre-1<sup>st</sup> classes will dismiss at 12:30 p.m. during the first complete week of school (August 18 - 22). Please follow the afternoon carpool procedures listed below on these early pick-up days. (There will also be faculty outside to assist with this early carpool, in case you have any questions when you arrive.)

**CARPOOL PROCEDURES**

***(In addition to the information listed below, please read the information posted on the Lower School Web site.)***

***Morning Carpool*** – Cars will enter the property on the east side of campus (the driveway closest to Roswell Road) and proceed around the school to the staircase on the west side of the campus. Faculty members and Safety Patrol

student volunteers will be stationed on the sidewalk every morning to open car doors for students. During the first week of school, kindergarten, Pre-1<sup>st</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>-grade teachers will meet their students at the top of the stairway to escort them to their classes.

***Afternoon Carpool*** – Cars will again enter the property on the east side of campus, forming two lines that will stop where morning carpool drops off. Parents should then exit their cars and proceed to the back of the campus. Following the afternoon prayer and announcements, teachers will escort students down the back stairs for dismissal. Please find your child, ensure that the teacher knows you are leaving with him or her, and return immediately to your car. When the whistle blows, cars will be directed from the lot.

***Severe Weather Carpool*** – On days when the weather is too severe (e.g. heavy rain, thunderstorms, lightning) to risk having the children wait outside for afternoon carpool, school will dismiss from the gym. Coach Evans will alert the people at the beginning of the carpool line to park their cars and proceed to the gym, and other drivers should follow as they arrive at school. (Please be sure to pull your car as far forward as possible so that we can keep cars from blocking Long Island Drive.) When the afternoon prayer and announcements are completed, teachers will escort their students to the gym, and will wait in a designated area for you to greet them and collect your child(ren.)

I hope the information provided to you via the school links will help answer any questions you might have with regard to the start of school. If you have additional questions, or if we can assist you in any other way, please contact us at (404) 255-0900.

The HSPS Lower School faculty, staff and I eagerly anticipate the arrival of you and your children on Welcome Back Day. Enjoy the rest of your summer vacation and please know that you and your children are in my thoughts and prayers every day.

Sincerely,

Linda Anthony  
Lower School Principal