



May 24, 2021

Dear All,

The above quote caught my attention and reminded me that this past year more than any has churned a heightened awareness of how important it is to have a grateful heart. From my perspective, as principal of this school, there were blessings in abundance amidst the many challenges each and every day. The happiness factor within our building has always been a given but never has it been so apparent as during this past school year. The teachers and students were thrilled to be in the school building. As we near the final bend, let us focus on the blessings that come our way -big and small-for they are the stuff that will lift our spirits as we march into the summer. The 2020-2021 school year was a very different year - not a lost year. Yes, we did have to make many sacrifices and put many of our tried-and-true traditions on hold, but the essence of who we are has remained intact. Dare I say that we are stronger and more resilient?!

To be honest I had no idea that I am nearing the completion of 10 years as principal at SVMS. I tend to live my life day by day and do my best to bring out the best in everyone I meet. Monday was a huge surprise, and I am very touched by the congratulatory gestures that came my way that day. I thank Miss Gisoldi for spearheading the day...right under my nose! We work closely together, and I do not know she managed to plan it without slipping a bit. The office staff were in on it and were also very hush hush. I need to be more mindful of what is happening right where I am! I thank all of you who took time to decorate your cars and make signs. I was very touched that Mrs. Mc Carthy, our Saint Patrick's Day musician, came with her piano accordion to play some Irish music. The mayor came with a proclamation and I was treated to a 'look back' slide show, a Vid Hug from the faculty, staff and some parents who serve on the Education Council. I received some very

touching and uplifting notes from the children and many beautiful gifts. The HSA and Education Council -and ultimately all of you- gave me a gift certificate to Morristown Performing Arts Center. I cannot wait to go there to do a few jigs and reels -in my seat, of course!- when the Irish bands come back there. I will cherish the day forever! I literally crawled out the door at the end of the day on Monday exhausted from the emotion of it all and considered hiring an Uber to take me home. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart and consider it a sacred privilege to be entrusted with the care of your children and the oversight of our wonderful staff.

The calendar days are turning quickly for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Their exams are this coming week which is their last formal week within our building. They are chomping at the bit and ready to launch like rockets! The Class of 2021 is a very bright group and they really knuckled down this school year with great academic focus. We will value our last few days with them and try our best to keep them from exploding with excitement. Pray for us! Seriously though this class has earned their place in the storied history of SVMS.

Let me tell you that it is a very challenging time to be in administration with all that is changing in the pandemic arena. So many restrictions have been lifted and so many changes made to protocols which has led to different interpretations and great confusion. Please take the time to read this week's Pandemic Update. With only a few weeks left of school, it behooves us to proceed with caution and vigilance so that we can end the year with keeping our record of being in every day intact. We are nearly there and I would hate for us to have to go remote so late in the game. We will have a Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday evening at 7PM. Please submit any questions/comments that you may have to [pandemic@svmsnj.org](mailto:pandemic@svmsnj.org). Here is the link for the meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89668792284>

So we are busy, busy, busy as the roller coaster pace takes us to the top of the mountain and I know that we will motor down in record time to June 15<sup>th</sup>. Stay on board and take time to relax and enjoy.

Blessings,

Sr. Noreen