



ST. EDMUND'S ACADEMY

WILLIAM L. KINDLER, PH.D · HEAD OF SCHOOL

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Dear Members of the St. Edmund's Academy Community,

I have just returned from the National Association of Independent Schools Conference where the mantra "sailing the winds of change" permeated the focus and tone of the formal programs and informal conversations. So much has been written, spoken, and debated about the economic winds of change ---actual and perceived --- as they impact our independent schools and more importantly, our Pittsburgh area institutions.

Recently, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette published an article which opened; "***Even Pittsburgh's priciest private schools are not immune to the nation's economic woes.***" I was interviewed by a reporter contributing to the article, but once the editing was completed, SEA did not meet two of the main causes highlighted. We are not one of the priciest schools, and our dependence on revenue from endowment to balance the annual operating budget is much lower than most others.

As was reported, all Pittsburgh private, independent schools continue to make operating decisions appropriate to their current and projected budget needs. The range of actions taken is directly related to the sobering realities that budget forecasts produce and the obvious need for each school to sustain its mission and provide excellence to those it serves. St. Edmund's Academy is in the forefront of making sound fiscal decisions by a fully engaged team of trustees and administrators dedicated to both the School's mission and educational excellence. Our ability to sustain both in addition to approving only a balanced budget requires an ongoing vigilance of the economic "winds" we depend on to "sail the course."

At this writing, our returned re-enrollment contracts are on par with the previous three years. Thank you, parents! We are seeking clarification of re-enrollment intentions from those we have not heard from, with the highest priority to keep the families who want to continue their partnership with SEA. Invitations for new admissions to our Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten are being returned in the numbers cautiously projected with more scheduled tours dotting our March calendar. Invitations to very strong admission candidates for grades 1-8 were mailed March 2, a date agreed to by all member schools of the Pittsburgh Consortium of Independent Schools (PCIS). Again, we conservatively look to numerous new admissions from this group.

Famed underwater explorer Sylvia Earle reminds us: "Our past, our present, and whatever remains of our future absolutely depend on what we do now." While she was referring to environmental challenges, her message is relevant to what we do during these turbulent economic challenges. I am confident that together, we will successfully navigate St. Edmund's Academy with renewed optimism for its future.

Thank you for your partnership and support.

Sincerely,

William Kindler