

**STATE OF THE SCHOOL**  
**St. Thomas the Apostle School**  
**January 23, 2015**

Greetings to all!

I am very proud to say that this past January 6th I celebrated one full year as Principal of St. Thomas the Apostle School. It has been exciting, fun, and an invigorating year filled with new passions for me both professionally and personally. It has been a pleasure to work with the faculty, form relationships with the parents and to serve the students.

I felt at this time it is important to provide this letter to you along with a “state” of where we are as a school here at STA. This is not a list just to showcase personal accomplishments-but rather an overview of the new/updated programs, security, curriculum, communication and technology incorporated in order to EXPAND ourselves for the one group we are all here for-our children.

We are a strong catholic school of almost 400 students and we are looking and planning to expand our Pre K, add new technology and programs in all our grades and continue the teachings of Jesus Christ.

This “state” of the school will reinforce that STA is strong, is growing and expanding. A parent had emailed me today to ask if tuition was raised because the Pre K program was in trouble. My answer is NO! We expanded the Pre K program in order to accommodate the many parents who call and ask for admittance as well as providing the opportunity for parents with various schedules. In essence, we have hired Mrs. Gray as a FULL TIME Pre K teacher, expanded services for Pre K with dedicated tablets for technology and leveled readers and to include library, spanish, art, music and gym for our 5 day 4 year old program. THIS is how we continue to provide a “feeder” system for grades K-8. We emphasize that we are an academic environment from Pre K, right up to the eighth grade.

The Pre K program must stand alone as we hope grades k-8 will do so in the near future. We are attempting to not only reduce, but cut the subsidy from the church to zero. This will allow us to be independent financially and stand alone, unlike many Catholic schools that are not able to do.. There will be NO closing, NO discussion of merging, we are already receiving applications from other schools.If there is an issue concerning tuition for you, please come and see me or go directly to Walt in the business office. He is more than willing to assist in whatever means necessary. We are here to assist and keep you here!

I also see OUR accomplishments as a collaborative effort among all of us; parents, parish, faculty/staff and administration.Our Catholic Education is so very important and necessary to provide our children with skills needed for their future education and to instill in them the faith they will need in this ever changing and challenging world.

STA has a tradition since 1956 in providing our students with pride and a strong faith based education. I am here to continue that tradition of molding our students into STA strong and updating/upgrading 21st century skills and programs in order for them to be prepared not only for high school, but for life. I have listed some of our accomplishments in the past year due to the unselfish work, assistance, support of all of you; faculty/staff, the parish, parents and volunteers.

I have also included scheduled plans for the 2015-2016 school year, all of which will assist in making STA the Catholic School of Destination in our area. Our goal is to grow as a student centered school surrounded by a safe and respectful environment.

I thank you all for your support during the past year. We have much to be proud of in our accomplishments, but rest assured, we are not done-there is so much more to do and TOGETHER we will continue to grow and succeed.

Blessings to You  
John W. Keeley  
Principal

STATE OF THE SCHOOL  
Additions/upgrades in last 12 months

- TV in lobby for dissemination of information and events
- Addition of a Certified Social Worker for Delaware students (Jeanne Doucett)
- addition of anti bullying curriculum in grade 5/study skills curriculum in grade 6
- Student emails in grades 4-8
- dedicated Ipads for Honors Math class
- Student school newspaper and STA Newscast Program
- purchased 12 Ipads for mobile carts
- New locks on gym doors for Lock Down
- added locks to bathrooms on both floors for added security if students are inside
- added new speakers/wireless audio system for old gym for announcements and drills
- updated wireless microphone for new gym
- Storage added to gym for CYO and Gym equipment in new gym
- WiFi throughout school for wireless use of all devices
- School website created and updated
- Increased professional development for the faculty
- Google Drive, Docs and Classroom added for faculty & staff
- Scheduled Principal Coffee for continued communication
- Rewrote student handbook and placed forms on school website
- Increased use and communication through Option C
- Paperless Report Cards, Discipline and Progress Reports
- Principal's Corner added for weekly communication, events
- Theater Arts Program (TAP) started
- addition of new sound system in old gym, updated lights
- National Junior Honor Society started
- Removed old green shed outside front of school
- addition of 2 computers in After CARES room for student homework as needed
- Positive reinforcement posters placed throughout the school
- Various classrooms and library, swings painted, garden area in back cleaned during Villanova Day
- air conditioning added to Honors Math classroom
- Trophy case cleaned and school store clothing also added (Thank you Molly)
- Atlas added in grades 5-8 for geography classes

### Scheduled Plans/upgrades for 2015-2016

- Addition of AM/PM/Full day 3 & 4 year old Pre K programs
- dedicated tablets for Pre K technology
- Leveled readers for Pre K
- Scholastic Assistance Center-SAC (tutored assistance for students who are struggling during day) no cost to parents
- 3D printer for math/art and across the curriculum, application and hands on of theory
- Old gym stage to be sanded and resurfaced in summer of 2015
- New stage curtains for the old gym stage
- Parent/teacher/student anti bullying policy/handbook
- Smartboard to be added to the library
- Increased "parent workshops" on technology, applications
- Digital microscope to be added for science classes
- Replace glass doors in back hall for safety
- "teller" window to be added to front lobby entrance for security and ID checks
- Add robotics section to our math or science classes
- Researching updates on use of school kitchen for hot lunches
- Fence to be placed between playground and swings area in front school and parking lot for safety