

STATEMENT OF MISSION

“How good the good God is. Why can’t we proclaim it to the whole world?”

St. Julie Billiart, Foundress, Sister of Notre Dame

Moreland Notre Dame School is an expression of the educational mission of the Catholic Church and the teaching ministry of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. In keeping with the *Hallmarks of a Notre Dame de Namur Learning Community*, faculty and staff, in partnership with parents, work to provide students with the foundations of Christ-centered faith and life-long learning: love, hope, simplicity, a longing for justice and truth, a desire to serve others, the power of critical thinking, self-discipline, and a sense of awe and wonder.

December 1, 2010

Dear Parents and Friends of Notre Dame School,

As you know, this year we are focusing on the importance of parents as the first educator of their child(ren) and a key source of support for this school community. You attended a mandatory meeting in September to learn about our new parent organization structure and to hear about your vital place in that structure. The Moreland Notre Dame School Board of Directors, the Sisters of Notre Dame, school administration, faculty and staff are very excited about the new energy among our school parents. In previous years we have called parents together early in the school year to hear about the “state of the school.” Because parents have already attended the earlier mandatory meeting, this year we will share that information through this letter to you.

First and foremost, in any school founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, there are certain values we hold dear. We are guided by the prophetic wisdom of St. Julie Billiart, and we use *The Hallmarks of a Notre Dame de Namur Learning Community*, our Student Learning Expectations, and the Mission of the school to establish and assess what we learn, how we learn, and the Catholic identity of our community. All three of those sources are included in our school handbook and on our website. We invite you to become familiar with them because they are central to your child(ren)’s experience at Notre Dame.

Our curriculum, with its mandate to “educate for life” is always expanding. This is the third year with our new math curriculum, *Progress in Mathematics*; our second year with the very effective *Accelerated Reader* Program; and our first year with *Art in Action*, an exciting new art curriculum that also supports the social studies curriculum. This year our teachers will be evaluating our science curriculum, completing what is called an “Indepth Study.” They will work with the state science standards and develop meaningful

ways to assess our students' learning in the subject area. Because we are a Notre Dame school, our teachers will also investigate ways in which our curriculum must incorporate the *Hallmarks*, our Student Learning Expectations, as well as express the Mission of the school.

There are challenges, too. The economy continues to affect both the school and our school families. The need for tuition assistance has never been greater, and our Board of Directors has worked to solicit sufficient donations to cover much of the need. That will continue to be a Board priority. Our enrollment has suffered from the economy, from families leaving the area, and perhaps, too, from needs that haven't been met by the school. As a Board and school administration we try to look honestly and earnestly at what attracts families to our school and what hinders them from attending. One thing we know for certain: our very best "marketing tool" is our parent community. We thank you for sharing the good news of Notre Dame with family, friends, and coworkers!

Because of the struggling economy, our salary schedule for teachers remained the same as last year and staff salaries have been frozen as well. The manner in which you honor your tuition contract and pay your FACTS bills faithfully is more important than ever before. The school's ability to meet payroll, pay for utilities and maintenance, and support the curriculum depends upon you.

We are happy to share with you the lists of accomplishments and challenges of our past school year, some challenges and opportunities we are experiencing in the current school year, as well as a summary of the income and expenses of the 2009-2010 school year. For 111 years it has been true that people like you, members of our parent community, are vital shareholders in Moreland Notre Dame School. In fact, as a result of your responses to our Parent Survey last year, changes in our school took place or are planned. (Where that is the case, we will make note of that in our list of accomplishments.) We are especially grateful for the new energy and creativity our parents are sharing in the new approach to parent involvement in the Mission of the school. May God bless you and your families during this school year—and always.

Jeff Kane
Chair, Board of Directors

Christine Grul
Principal

Accomplishments during 2009-10

Academic and Student Needs:

- Introduction of *Accelerated Reader* to the curriculum, giving children additional practice of reading and vocabulary skills, providing additional important assessment of reading, leading to an increase in ITBS reading scores.

- An emphasis on teacher collaboration with one another and teacher training—with particular emphasis on the students' success in reading through the *Accelerated Reader* Program.
- Continued growth of our service learning curriculum, *Heart, Head, and Hands*, including service by students at Loaves and Fishes and grocery bag collection; service at Head Start; projects to benefit Pajaro Valley Shelter Services and Second Harvest Food Bank; projects to benefit the Sisters of Notre Dame and their work in Africa and South America; and individual service within the community by our seventh and eighth grade students.
- Adoption of *Art in Action* for the 2010-11 school year and application for a grant to cover the start-up costs. (Parent Survey)

School Environment, Services, and Safety

- Initial year of an updated Emergency Preparedness Plan and consultation with fire and police departments regarding student safety. Classroom and school-wide emphasis on good hygiene practices to prevent transmission of communicable illnesses.
- Completion of our second year of the School Extension Program
- Work within the parent community to redesign parent organization structures to better fit family/parent life and better serve the needs of students and the school. (Parent Survey)
- Continued work by parents on increased participation in yard duty, classroom volunteers, cafeteria support, and successful utilization of Parent Team plan for shared responsibility of classroom activities.
- Upgrade of 3rd and 4th grade classrooms, girls' lavatory, and landscaping of the Brennan Street entrance to school. (Parent Survey)

Other Board/Administration Actions and Accomplishments:

- A thorough study of issues related to recruitment and retention of students, as well as an emphasis on marketing of the school—including redesign of registration materials/process, additional advertising, and registration materials at parishes and local preschools.
- A survey of the parent community concerning the school's religious and academic programs, the learning environment, and student safety.
- First year of implementation of FACTS Tuition Management for collection of tuition and processing of tuition assistance applications.

- Adherence to and revision of the Strategic Long Range Plan first developed in 2006-07.
- Continued oversight of all fundraising efforts and planned giving by the newly appointed Development Director, as well as involvement in planning for new parent organization structures. Invitations to donors to participate in various aspects of the school, including the endowment, tuition assistance, special programs, and capital improvements.

Challenges and Opportunities for 2010-2011

- Support and encouragement for parent organization and committees. Establishment of the leadership council for parent organization and consolidation of finances.
- Training for faculty and parent volunteers in the *Art in Action* curriculum, and ongoing efforts to make the program successful in each classroom.
- Renovation of certain out of date aspects of the gymnasium, in partnership with St. Patrick's Parish, particularly the gym floor. (Parent Survey)
- Introduction of *Smart Board* technology to junior high classrooms
- Renovation of the first and second grades during the summer of 2011.
- Monitoring of the effectiveness of *Accelerated Reader* in enhancing student reading skills and the enjoyment of reading during its second year of adoption
- Ongoing efforts to ensure sources of income for the school in addition to tuition.
- Careful monitoring of tuition accounts through FACTS, in conjunction with a revised policy for collecting delinquent tuition.
- Continued attention by the Board, administration, development director and committee on the recruitment and retention of students to improve enrollment.
- Continued efforts to share the good news of Notre Dame School in Watsonville and market the assets of a Notre Dame education.
- Continued effort to evaluate, improve, and promote the School Extension Program.
- Faculty collaboration to become familiar with new WCEA/WASC Accreditation protocol, *Improving Student Learning*

Financial Summary July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

2009-2010

Income

Tuition	858,290
Parish Contribution	10,000
*Other Sources	626,066
Fees, Special Programs	138,720
Food Service	39,851
Total Income	<u>1,670,927</u>

Expense

Salaries/Benefits/Taxes	1,089,759
Administrative Expense	145,042
Instructional Programs & Materials	84,929
Student Activities	51,916
Maintenance & Operation	76,203
Tuition Assistance	112,000
Food Service	29,833
Total Expense:	<u>1,559,843</u>

Note: The 2009-2010 fiscal year was notable in some ways. Our tuition income declined because of a tuition freeze and slightly lower enrollment. On the other hand, our “other source of income” was greatly increased due to a significant bequest and increased efforts in the area of development. Because of the generosity of donors and alumni, the school was able to pay off the mortgage on the property purchased in 2002 where the junior high, parking lot, and playfield stand now. That debt was paid in full with \$335,135 from funds raised by the Blue and White Gala and the bequest left to the school by Isabelle and Marjorie Secondo. (The amount paid for the mortgage is not reflected in the report above.) An endowment fund was also established to begin to ensure the future of the school. Two classrooms were updated and tuition assistance granted was also significant. Funding for tuition assistance is provided by donations made for that purpose.

In most years we rely on tuition income to support our staff salaries and benefits. We rely on donations and fundraising to support the remainder of the school program. In that sense, a significant portion of the expense of your child’s education is paid for by the hard work of those who fundraise for the school, and parents and others who support

those efforts, including our Parent Organization, the Alumni and Friends, and those who manage our sports program. . Another significant contribution is made by those who love Notre Dame School and donate annually or include the school in their estate plans. In that sense, every child at Notre Dame School receives a form of “tuition assistance.” It is important to the Board of Directors, the school administration, and the Sisters of Notre Dame that our tuition remain as affordable as possible.