

Dear West Catholic parents and students,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! I hope you had the opportunity to relax and enjoy the beauty of God's creation during these summer months. It was certainly an improvement from last summer as we moved closer to more normal times. I pray the pandemic subsides and we can put it all behind us soon.

In regard to COVID-19, West Catholic is committed to following all legal mandates while deferring recommendations to the parents/guardians of our students. We believe parents have the responsibility to make decisions regarding the health and safety of their children. Please make sure you read the COVID-19 Letter included in our back school packet, and don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have further questions or concerns.

Kirsten Herich, our international and domestic admissions director, has done an outstanding job this year. We are anticipating our largest freshman class in three years and a growth in enrollment overall. While our international program has been greatly affected by COVID-19 and travel restrictions, we are also expecting 17 students from countries such as Germany, Norway, Denmark, South Korea, Vietnam, Spain, Brazil, Mexico and China.

If you have been on campus recently, you may have noticed a few changes, and there are many more to come! Early this summer, we were blessed with the largest bequest in West Catholic's history to date—a \$3 million gift. The gift was restricted to a number of causes, most notably the installment of competition tennis courts on newly purchased land on the south part of our campus and numerous changes to the baseball and softball fields. We are moving forward with these projects and will keep you updated. In addition, this gift allowed us to pay off the \$405,000 debt still owed on the competition gym. West Catholic is now debt free!

In addition to the projects from this remarkable gift, we will also be replacing the home-side bleachers after the football season is over. The north side of our building also has a brand new look. We have cleaned up the area where the convent used to stand and are in the process of upgrading this space to be used by the band, soccer and lacrosse. The cafetorium has been painted and looks beautiful. New stage curtains are being installed. We completed significant upgrades to our electrical system, and the parking lot has been coated and repainted. I am thankful to the generosity of a number of donors who stepped forward and helped with some of these projects. Thanks is also owed to Mary Jo Jones, our dining services director, who has been able to make cafeteria improvements through her growing lunch program.

In June we said goodbye to a number of longtime board members whose terms expired. We are thankful for the service of Bill Roth, Tim Thimmesch, Carol Blundy, Jean King, Dave Veneklase, Greg Meyers and Miles Schmidt. Our new Executive Committee members are Chair Duane Kluting, Vice Chair Tom Wesholski, Treasurer Doug Mileski, Secretary Jodi Arsulowicz and, standing in for Chair Emeritus Bill Roth, Dave Veneklase, past chair. New members will be announced after they are officially installed in September. Please thank our outgoing board

members as they have successfully guided West Catholic these past six years. We couldn't be where we are today without them!

Thank you all for trusting us with your most valuable possession—your children. We will work diligently this year to form disciples of Christ through our dynamic, excellence-driven Catholic education. God bless and good luck in this upcoming school year!

Cynthia Kneibel | President / CEO

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