

Good afternoon SJS Families,

When we think about schools, we immediately think about all of the people inside of them – the students, the teachers, all the other people that support learning. This is the heartbeat of every school. After that we probably think about the academics and the curriculum – the reading, the math, etc. This is the neurological center of every school. However, a huge part of schools is the actual physical space that students are in every day. This is the body that we live in. Students make this space their own and it becomes a home away from home. Having a facility that encourages learning and play and friendship and service is imperative to an excellent school.

Every year at St. John School, we make sure that our facility (our building and grounds) is ready for students. We make sure that it is clean and try to make some upgrades – some paint, some new furniture, etc. Occasionally, we can accomplish something magical with our facility – something beyond the realm of normal. Something that captures the hearts and minds of all. This year, St. John School was able to do this with the installation of our new field. This field enhances our facility and opens a myriad of possibilities for our entire community. My mind races when I think of the short- and long-term possibilities.

A project like this doesn't just happen. Instead, it requires the coordination and dedication of many people and groups. As our field project is officially complete, I want to offer some enormous thank you notes.

First and foremost, thank you to Joe Butler and JMC Contracting. Yes, Joe has many people that work with him, but he is the sole driving force behind this project. His enthusiasm and dedication, as well as hard work and sweat, shined through every single day this summer. He had a vision and got it done. He does this with a constant smile on his face and evident love in his heart. There was no detail that was too small for Joe to address. As we all know, Joe also has an awesome partner in Meg, and she deserves a big thank you for the financial work behind the scenes. By the way, Joe did this in less than two months – simply amazing!

Next, thank you to Keith Burke, our representation for 78 Sports. Keith was able to get the materials for the field ordered and installed in an efficient way. He was

also able to answer our questions and offer thoughts and solutions. Keith deserves a big thank you for the quality of the turf and padding as well as the installation.

Thank you to all the subcontractors who supported this endeavor from fence installation to stair production and installation to asphalt laying to tree removal. It truly does take a team.

And I cannot let this email go by without thanking Mr. John Hall. John was involved in every aspect of the field from the design to the installation to the final touches. This project would have never even have gotten off the ground without John. When we talk about the heart and soul of St. John School, John Hall is right there.

As for the finances of the field, thank you to the SJS parent group who was able to finance about 40% of this project. This was the result of two amazing years of fundraising. Thank you in particular to the leadership team of Meg Butler and Jen Millington. The other 60% of the field was financed through the Capital budget from St. John School. Also, a special thank you to the Troville family who donated the soccer goals.

We are all excited for our students to start to utilize this field this year. When we meet as a faculty next week, we will come up with processes and procedures for field use. One thing to remember is that this is a private field for SJS use only.

We will have an official blessing of the new field after our Opening of the Year Mass on Friday, September 8.