

Dear St. Mary's Community:

In starting my fourth year as Principal, I am honored to be writing this letter about St. Mary's for our website. There are many aspects that separate us from the other schools in the Independence area:

- 97% of our students go on to college
- Traditionally, about 70% of our students receive grants and scholarships to the colleges they are attending
- Non-existent drop-out rate
- Weekly Eucharist celebration
- Daily prayer to start and end the day
- Atmosphere to promote learning
- High expectations for student behavior and achievement
- Enforced dress and grooming codes
- 95% of our students are involved in extracurricular activities

Today, 115 students of various backgrounds attend St. Mary's. They have chosen St. Mary's because their parents attended, it is their school of choice, the idea of continuing on with a Catholic education; but, most importantly, it is the place they feel they belong. While at St. Mary's, they feel they are able to get the most out of their high school careers.

Over the last 158 years, the faces have changed and the building has as well, but the mission of St. Mary's has remained the same: *To provide students with an education and values to enable them to become leaders in the Church and community.* **“Education for Life.”**

The importance of Catholic education is even more crucial today than it was ten years ago. St. Mary's has been a cornerstone in education for students of Independence, Blue Springs, Lee's Summit, Oak Grove, Kansas City, Odessa, Bates City and the Grain Valley communities. By committing to St. Mary's, parents are providing education and moral compass for students to use for years to come.

I thank you for your support and belief in St. Mary's High School. May God bless you and your family in all that you do.

Jeff Lynch