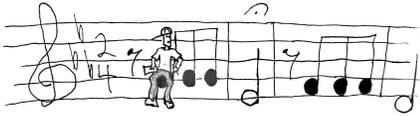


August 9, 2017



Dear Students, Parents, and Colleagues of Saint Mary School,

Please accept this letter as my farewell from my post as Music Director at Saint Mary School. I love our program, our community, and most of all, my students, but this fall, I am beginning a new position teaching history at Trinity Hall. Prior to becoming a music teacher, I studied at Teachers College for my Master of Arts in the Teaching of Social Studies, and I am excited to have this great opportunity to dive back into this fascinating area of study. I trust that you will be left in very good hands under the direction of Jonathan Butts and the fabulous SMartS teaching team.

From the first downbeat to our final fermata, building and living in this music program together with you all has been the most amazing experience for me. It seems like almost yesterday that we began our journey together with our first music class in which I didn't say a word, and our first instruments consisted of overturned garbage cans and drum sticks I tied old tube socks around for makeshift mallets. Oh, the places we've been — the masses, the SW Cafes, the recitals, the musicals, the new equipment, the Sun Center Arena, the radio, the band, the albums, the rehearsals, the smiles, the memories, the inspiration.

Saint Mary Singers: Friday masses with you were always the highlight of my week. You channel the Holy Spirit into our music and it hits my heart. Listening to our recordings will make any cloudy day sunny, and I can't thank you enough. You're awesome. SoundWaves Big Band: I've always wanted to be in a rockin' band since I was a kid, and you were it. Thanks for being so outstanding, professional, and supportive of each other, for sharing my sensibility of fun music, and for always inviting me to jam along with you. SoundWaves Lessons: you are the school within the school. Thanks for being such an inspiring and collaborative community of musicians; keep it going and keep growing. TheatreWorks: continue to "express yourselves!" I deeply appreciate everyone in the company and on the production team for making me feel like a big shot. I'm a huge fan, and I can't wait to see you grace the stage and backstage again. SMartS team: thanks for believing in me; keep powering the dreams.

Thank you to everyone on the staff and to parents for the enormous amount of support and encouragement you have given to me and our new programs over the past eight years. Thanks for always believing in me and making me feel appreciated. I have immensely enjoyed teaching at Saint Mary School, and I'm grateful for all that I was able to learn, to do, and for all the people, adults and students that I have been blessed to know and work with.

As my students well know, due to the unpredictability that is characteristic in a live performance, they must be prepared for what they know will happen as well as for any surprises. As they continue to develop their musical and intellectual voices, harmonize with each other and make their individual melodies, I can't wait to hear the places they'll go. It will be music to my ears.

This has been a most wonderful, magical, and unforgettable chapter in my life, and it is with a mix of melancholy and excitement that I prepare to open the next. If I can continue to be of some assistance, let me know; I can be reached at mkSoundWaves@gmail.com. Thank you for everything. I'll miss you. Play on.

Musically yours,

 Mike Kabash