

Principal's Bulletin
2008-2009 Series #10
August 8, 2008

Dear Students, Parents, Alumni, and Friends:

Today marks the end of our quarter exams and the official end of the first quarter. This signifies that we have been in school for the past ten weeks. For the freshmen, the past ten weeks have been a period of adjustment – their debut into high school life, characterized by college-style exams, freedom to move about and make decisions, independent of their parents. Many are away from their homes for the first time, so life at SMS becomes a precursor of their lives as four years from now, they will move to the big city for a university education and college-style living. The first quarter marks another major shift-- from elementary to high school life. It embeds a large degree of independent study and critical thinking, alongside it, the acceptance of personal responsibility—to study, to share the burden of tasks at home, to interact with other students, and to comply with rules and regulations on their own volition, without their fathers' and mothers' strict monitoring. Parents also adjust, as their little boys and girls are gradually being transformed into young men and women who are learning how to think and live independently. Many parents will now soon feel a loss of control over the destinies of their children; on the other hand, it should be a time for celebration for all, as they are accomplishing the ultimate objective of parenthood—their children's self-sufficiency.

It is therefore timely that we at SMS now embark on the second theme of the school year: **RESPONSIBILITY**. We as parents (and I include myself and the faculty as surrogate parents) need to charge our children with decisions and tasks, while making them accountable for the consequences and/or the credit for their actions. We can only stand at the side to give guidance when needed, and to give advice when asked. However, “loosening” parental control does not mean abrogating our personal responsibility of parenthood. Our kids will make mistakes, and may continue to make them, over and over again. We need to be there to support them so that they can learn from their mistakes; but we cannot cuddle them as if they are still our babies. We should make them accountable for their misdeeds and let them face the consequences of their actions; but we also need to make our kids realize that punishment and consequences are done out of love and concern with the objective of changing behavior for the better, and not out of retribution. Effective parenting prepares our children to become effective parents in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Friday Night at the Movies resumes tonight with the final episode (Part 3) of the Star Wars saga. Screening will begin at 6:30 p.m. and should be finished by 8:30.

Tomorrow, the **Garden Club** will be convened to clean up the campus after two weeks of inclement weather. Students have been constantly advised that if they are absent, they need to be responsible for securing an excuse slip from their parents. This will enable them to make up any missed work, if the reason for the absence is legitimate. I expect about 50-70 students on work detail tomorrow as a result of unexcused absence, tardiness, uniform violations, and inability to do their assigned responsibilities.

Report Card distribution will be done on Friday, August 15. This will enable parents to review the academic progress of their children. The Report Cards of out-of town students will be issued to the students themselves so that parents from out of town need not come to the campus. The card will be enclosed in a sealed envelope, with a return slip that must be signed by the parents as an acknowledgement of receipt, and given back to the school on Tuesday, August 19. Electronic copies or report cards can be emailed to those who request them. Please contact us at kym@smssagada.org.

When you receive your child's report card, please take the time and discuss the grades and the comments, as these are the basis for future improvement. Under Values Education, students will rate themselves (grade and comments) on how they performed according to the concept of Respect, which is our first Quarter theme. The grade will show their overall performance, based on individual criteria such as respect for elders, their family, their colleagues, and their environment. The grade will NOT be counted in the student's GPA, or general point average, which is the basis of granting honors and promotion. However, the grade is given the appropriate credit and is recorded in the transcript.

I will be calling for individual principal-parent meetings for those who receive failing grades, those who are at risk of losing financial aid and scholarships, and those who are not doing well due to attitude and behavior. Please make it a point to attend this conference.

August 18, Monday, has been declared a holiday celebrating Ninoy Aquino Day. This will give us all a well-deserved break from a hectic 1st Quarter. The dormitories will be closed, and all school activities (except for Saturday Garden Club) are suspended. Dormitorians who will not be going home will spend the three-day weekend in the Principal's Residence.

August 25, Monday, is also a holiday (All Heroes Day). However, we will hold school, as this is our designated day for **Pista sa Santa Marya**. Both the HS PTA and the Kinder PTA will be convening a meeting to discuss preparations and involvement. If the weather does not cooperate, we will look for another schedule.

Like all of us in school, I look forward to the forthcoming three-day weekend. As the Confucian saying goes, “Enjoy, but not too much!”

Dennis Gomowad Faustino
Principal