

James Newman, Ph.D., Head of School

February 2012

Dear Academy Families and Friends,

This is an exciting time of year — relocating families visiting, enrollment contracts arriving, and prospective students shadowing. With so much going on during this academic year, it's also a great time to begin to look forward to what the coming year will bring. Once again, next year promises *something more and something different*.

Harrisburg Academy is uniquely organized and capable of preparing your students for the remarkable challenges of the 21st century. Additional "fine tuning" to next year's instruction and curriculum will ensure that.

For example, as last month's "Science Summit" projected, new opportunities for environmental science and additional "hands-on" lab science are part of the planning process. Our focus on 21st century learning competencies will be magnified throughout our curriculum in 2012-13. And, our successful design for 1-to-1 computing will be expanded in Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools to increase student opportunities and self-directed learning.

Our plans for not only maintaining but growing the academic and co-curricular programs will be managed as you have come to expect — in ways that suit our school, students, and community. At the same time, we know that all of our constituencies value excellent stewardship of our budgets and that the school operates in a cost-conscious manner. Being mindful of our expenses in the long run has enabled us to keep our tuition increases low for the past decade.

For example, while we are moving forward with the expanded environmental science curriculum noted above, we are also working to become more sustainable and "green" while cutting overhead costs. During the period 2004 to 2011, our commitment to "greening of the Academy" resulted in a 53-percent reduction of office expenses (postage, copying, etc.). During that same seven-year period, we spent 3.3 percent less on our utilities and fuel — and that's after air conditioning all classroom space at the Academy! (Look for next week's Spartan Spirit blog entry by Steve Preston, our Director of Business Operations, for more details.)

Our planning balances the need for fiscal responsibility with keeping our focus exactly where it must be — on your students' needs to master our curriculum and make the kind of social and emotional growth that is so critical to their future success.

Alvin Toffler, the clear-eyed author of "Future Shock," wrote, "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." When many of us read Toffler's work years ago, I'm not sure we knew just how correct time would prove him to be. Preparing our students for the unique challenges of our rapidly changing world remains at the heart of the mission and core values of the Academy.

Spread the news about the success of our school community. Your informal "testimonials" to friends and co-workers are invaluable, and just what it will take to keep our school — and the Admission Office — busy and smiling throughout the spring.

With warm regards,
Jim