August, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians:

My over thirty-eight years of educational experience includes teaching twenty-six years of English/Language Arts in grades 6-12 and junior college in public schools. Likewise, I have been a Catholic school administrator for 12 years in two Texas dioceses as well as in Louisiana. My degrees are a B.A. in Secondary Education and a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction as well as Certifications in secondary English, German, and E.S.L. and Mid-Management (Educational Administration) through the State of Texas.

I firmly believe in the mission and philosophy of Catholic Education, academic excellence and safety of *all students*, compassion toward others and the uniqueness and integrity of each human being.  Each of your children are very important to me as I have dedicated myself to servant leadership working with God’s beloved children, their families, my colleagues, and the Holy Ghost Catholic Community of which I have been a part since 1979.

On a personal note, I have sung with the Affinity “Folk” Group since 1979, worked with the junior high C.C.E. and Confirmation program in years past, and worked with Catholic Girl Scouts. I am a wife of almost 20 years, a mother, step-mother, and grandmother of four-one girl and three very active boys! Two years ago I “retired” from administration to return to Houston to be close to my mother who lives in Bellaire and suffers from Alzheimer’s. During these two years, I also tried my hand at substitute teaching which I enjoyed as it brought me back to my first love, the classroom. “Retirement” simply did not suit me; I am active and I need to be planted and grow.

I am the eighth grade homeroom teacher (more about that in future communiques) as well as teaching grades 5-8 grammar and 7-8 literature. We will learn much and have fun doing so. I believe in Christ-centered and student-centered classes; therefore, our faith will be integrated into our academic subjects and students are expected to take an active part in all that we do. As Christ has high expectations of us, I have high expectations of myself and my students. I am here to serve, yet I expect my students to work diligently each and every day. Should any student be absent, they are expected to find out exactly what was covered and to make up any and all work in a timely manner. I will be available to meet with students after school to assist them as long as a request is made in advance. Homeroom students are expected to get ready for the day in a quiet manner and look for any daily expectations posted. Grades 5th - 6th grade grammar students are to come in and immediately begin work in their DOL (Daily Oral Language) notebook which will count as a grade each quarter. The 7th – 8th grade literature & grammar students are to come in and immediately write in their journal. Each day will have a journal topic and five complete sentences are required, and students are to use proper grammar and spelling. I have been blessed with a magnificent group of students, and I am looking forward to working with them and you, their parents/guardians this new school year.

I believe in open and frequent communication, and you will hear from me often. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or want clarification. There will be times that I will require your signature in a timely manner. As we progress, there will be opportunities for meetings and volunteering. Together, with God’s help, we will continue to make an already excellent school, an even more exemplary school because of your students. My prayer is that God will richly bless each of you as we journey together.

In His grip,

Mary Margaret Stepleton-Hitt, M.Ed.