

## A New Year – A New Look!

October 2020

With great excitement, Nazareth Elementary opened its doors on September 9 after six long months! Along with our eagerness to have the children back were first day butterflies. However, this year the butterflies were the questions in our minds. Did we prepare enough, did we miss anything essential in the NYSDOH mandates, did we have the screening process in place, did we have enough PPE? Once the cars and buses started arriving though, our worries fluttered away. It was wonderful to see the children again! Above the masks, we saw the joy and delight in their eyes. They were so happy to be together again!

School has been going very well, and except for the tears of a few preschoolers, the children have settled in beautifully and adjusted so well to this new way of education. Desks spaced apart, new procedures for walking in halls and using restrooms, water bottles and extra handwashing have all become normal to them. The main reminder we have to give is to keep masks covering noses.

What would be the same if you could visit right now?

- ✓ Decorated classrooms and hallways
- ✓ Creative teaching at all levels
- ✓ Happy children engaged in the learning process
- ✓ Student work hanging in the halls
- ✓ A dedicated and caring staff
- ✓ A spirit of warmth and love
- ✓ The laughter of children on the playground
- ✓ Daily prayer together led by a student over PA and classroom prayers

What would be different?

- Face masks on staff and students
- Temperature checks and screening of staff and students daily
- Hand sanitizer at each door, in every room, and office
- Paw print decals spaced six feet apart in every hallway
- Signs reminding children to keep three steps apart on the stairs
- 'Wash your hands' signage by every sink
- Shields on office counters, tables, and in the cafeteria
- Classroom desks and music chairs spaced six feet apart
- Water bottles instead of drinking fountains
- Rhythm and dance lessons in Music rather than singing
- 15 children learning remotely for the first quarter
- All K-6 children will soon be working on their Chromebooks (purchased through Title I funding.)

While the face of education has changed, the spirit of Nazareth has not. We are so grateful to all who have continued to support us with prayers and donations. We are grateful to parents for remaining safe at home so we can remain safe at school. We are grateful to the Leadership Team for their ongoing support. I am most grateful to our incredible staff who have gone above and beyond for months to give Nazareth a safe and awesome beginning! *Check out our website and Facebook page for more highlights.*

Nazareth began in 1871. Almost 150 years later, we continue the mission to address the needs of the times through education. Our children and their families need Nazareth more than ever now. The Nazareth community is a sign of hope and a place of peace in a troubled world. It is a place where faith, love, and learning thrive! Please hold us in your good prayers that this will be a healthy year for all.

*Sr. Margaret Mancuso, SSJ*  
*Principal*