



*An e-Newsletter for the Families of Notre Dame Academy*

## LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL ◀

Greetings parents!

Emmanuel - "God is with us". As we try to make sense of the tragic events of last Friday this refrain has great meaning. On Monday morning we had a prayer service to honor and pray for the victims and their families in Newtown, Connecticut shooting. This horrific incident has touched so many lives and it was important for us to gather as a community to reflect and offer our prayers. At the service I reminded our students that God is ever present in our lives even when such horrible things happen. As part of the service each student wrote the name of a child they would like to keep in prayer on a small notecard. All of the children's names are in a basket at the foot of the altar in our chapel. They will remain there for the Christmas season. This is one small way that we can respond to this tragedy with hope and faith that God is with us always.

While this horrible incident took place far from our area, we should never take the safety and security of our students, faculty and staff for granted. This is central to our mission as a Catholic school. NDA has emergency and disaster plans in place including a lockdown procedure. We conduct drills to prepare for weather and other types of emergency. When we return from break we will practice our lockdown procedure. The C-notify system allows for parent notification in the event of an emergency. We maintain regular communication with the local police and emergency personnel to secure their support when needed.

Our security system includes doors that are locked, requiring key cards for entry. Visitors are required to register at the main office once they are buzzed in by school personnel. We also maintain cameras at various locations inside and outside the building. To ensure the safety of our students we do rely on parents, first responders and community officials. As a parent we ask that you remind your daughter that safety is her responsibility as well. Students need to use their key cards to access the building and follow procedures for admitting visitors. Most importantly, students need to remember they should not admit others with their own key card. All visitors including parents are asked to check in at the front office after being admitted by office personnel at the front door.

The news of the Sandy Hook tragedy reminds us all of how much we have to be thankful for as a community. We also recognize that these types of crises can affect each of us in different ways. Children and adolescents, especially, may have many questions and concerns. The following is a list of resources you might wish to consult for information about handling these types of crises and having conversations with young people about them. At our prayer service, I also reminded our students that we have counselors in our Student Services department who can offer support and guidance at this time.

- [SAMHSA's Coping with Violence and Traumatic Events Website](#) has tips for talking with children, helping students cope with media coverage
- [Coping With Crisis: Tips for Parents and Educators](#) Helping children cope with national tragedy
- [American Academy of Pediatrics: Resources to Help Parents, Children and Others Cope in the Aftermath of School Shootings](#) for helping others to cope in the aftermath of school shootings

It is important for all of us to remember that we should continue our normal routines. This is a special time of year and, as I told our students on Monday, we should all continue to prepare for the joy and blessing of the Christmas season. In that spirit, and on behalf of the faculty and staff of NDA, I wish you and your family a very blessed Christmas season and many joys in the New Year.

Please note that there will be no Panda Press next week.

May you know God's goodness each day,

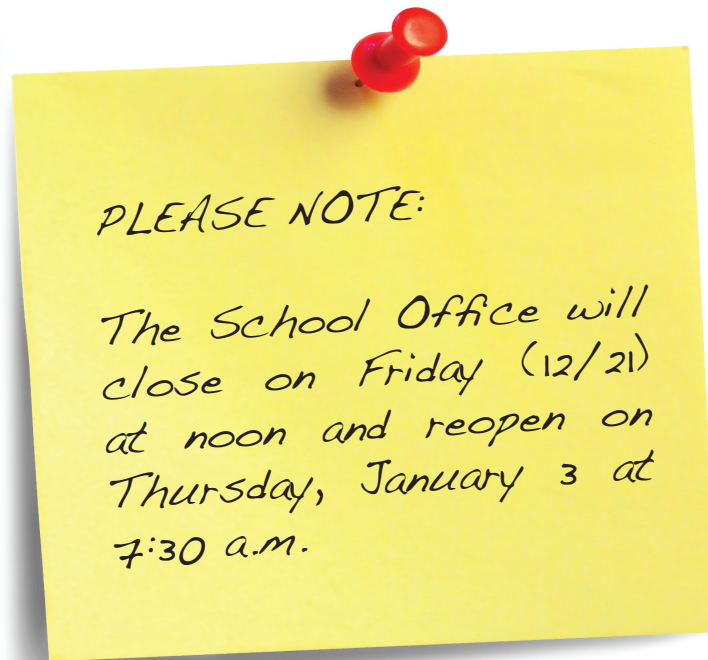


Dr. Laura Koehl



## “BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD.” ◀

Spoken by a true leader, Ghandi's words empower each and every one of us to make a positive difference and to assume our responsibility to protect the human dignity of those around us. Upon their return from Christmas break, all NDA students will attend an assembly that emphasizes appropriate social behavior. Much of what will be presented focuses on what defines bullying behaviors (relational aggression and cyberbullying), how students can respond to such behaviors, and why it is important to report and stand up to students who are bullies. As a school community, we can be an agent for change in a nation whose schools report about 20% of students in grades 9-12 experience bullying (Center for Disease Control and Prevention).



## DISH ROOM NEWS ◀



Hello Dish Room Volunteers! We need volunteers for the following dates: January: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31.

If you are able to donate just about an hour and 45 minutes on any of these dates, we would greatly appreciate it! You can sign up to help at [CAFETERIA SIGN-UP](#).

## NEWS FROM THE STUDENT LIFE OFFICE ◀

### Merry Christmas from the Student Life Office!

The NDA community spread holiday cheer last Friday when it hosted its Friday night Christmas mixer. The event raised over \$400, which will support this year's Junior and Senior After Prom. A huge "thank you" to the PTO and Student Council members for coordinating the event, but much gratitude is extended to the freshman class who represented the largest group to attend the mixer. Congratulations class of 2016! You have received recognition of earning NDA's Spirit Stick for the largest number of students from your class to attend the mixer. To all NDA Pandas: watch for the next Spirit Stick event!



### Silver Bells!

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors are looking forward to the Silver Bells Dance taking place after the Christmas break on Friday, January 4. Students who will be bringing a date must complete a permission form which can be picked up in the school's office. All forms must be turned in by Thursday, January 3 and only those guests who have prior approval will be admitted the night of the dance. All students are expected to dress appropriately with dresses of appropriate length, and the back, stomach, and chest areas must be properly covered. Students who do not follow NDA's dress code will not be admitted to the dance.

### Pandas in the Egnog Jog

This past Saturday, NDA students, parents, and faculty ran 3.1 miles to eggnog and bagels during the annual Mount Adams Egnog Jog. Coordinated by NDA faculty and members of the Gym Mamas Club, participation in the 5K began with weeks of training, hard work, and determination. Way to go Pandas!

### Pictured left to right:

Mrs. Grayson, Emily Witt, Emma Hehman, Ms. Burgei, Carrie Hall, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Wagner



## COUNSELING AND STUDENT SERVICES ◀

**January 22 - Next “College Financial Aid Presentation” at NDA:** We had our first Financial Aid Presentation last Tuesday, December 11. Parents are reminded that Paul Calme will be returning to NDA on Tuesday, January 22 to give this same presentation. If you were not able to attend the last week’s meeting, the same information will be presented on January 22. All parents are invited to attend and Senior parents are highly encouraged to attend. Again, all parents are welcome, regardless of the grade level your student is currently in. If you have any questions about this event, please contact Ms. Burgei at [burgeik@ndapandas.org](mailto:burgeik@ndapandas.org).

**Financial Aid Information for Parents:** Along with attending one of the College Financial Aid Presentations, parents can find additional information and resources regarding College Financial Aid on NDA’s Website. Helpful links include: A list of documents needed to complete the FAFSA, ways to get estimates of the Financial Aid you may be eligible for, information on filling out the FAFSA, deadlines information, and much more. To be directed to the Financial Aid page on the NDA Website click here: [NDA Website\\_Financial Aid Page](#). If you have any questions about Financial Aid, feel free to contact Ms. Burgei at [burgeik@ndapandas.org](mailto:burgeik@ndapandas.org).

**Senior Parents:** Please remind your daughters to check her deadlines for College Admissions Applications and/or Scholarships. If she has any January 15 deadlines, please encourage her to turn in her Pink Request form as soon as possible to request that NDA sends any needed materials. Thanks! - Ms. Burgei

**Scholarship Bulletins for Seniors and Senior Parents:** There will be a new Scholarship Bulletin being sent out in the next week to Seniors and Senior Parents. This new Scholarship Bulletin will also be accessible on our website, along with the 2 Scholarship Bulletins already released. There are many opportunities out there to find scholarships of all sorts...these resources are definitely worth checking out. To review previous Bulletins and new Bulletins, please visit this page on our website: [NDA Scholarship Bulletins](#).

## ADULT BEGINNING GROUP PIANO AT NDA’S PIANO LAB ◀

Learn the basics of making music – note reading, chord patterns, and proper technique – in a relaxed, fun, and learning-filled environment.

Course content includes:

- Finger numbers, proper playing posture, keyboard topography
- Note values and rhythm
- Note identification on the staff and reading music
- I-IV-V Chords
- Accidentals



The classes will be held on Tuesdays from 6:00 - 6:50 p.m. beginning January 8 through May 28 (no class on April 2 for Spring Break). The classes will be in the Piano Lab on the ground floor of Notre Dame Academy. The cost is \$265 and includes your book.

Each group is unique and will determine the pace of the class. At the end of the course, we will have an evening of good music, food, friends, and fun. Come join us! For more information contact Nell Schaffer at [schaffern@ndapandas.org](mailto:schaffern@ndapandas.org) or 859.261.4300.

## COMMUNITY NEWS ◀



### **THIS IS THE LAST DAY to cast your vote for St. Augustine School in “Power A Bright Future” Grant Program**

Help St. Augustine School win up to \$50,000 by casting your vote before 11:59 p.m. today, December 19. Adults and children 13 and older can visit [www.PowerABrightFuture.com](http://www.PowerABrightFuture.com) to vote once a day. Neighbors, friends and family can also vote for their favorite school on the website or right from their phones via text message (message and data rates may apply).