

November 17, 2020

Dear Families of the St. Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Program.

I hope that you and your families are doing well during these challenging times. I know that adjusting to the new normal has been difficult, but I appreciate all of your patience and understanding, as we continue to work to provide your child(ren) with a quality Catholic virtual education in the St. Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Program. I know that the transition has not been easy for those problems that we faced; I once again apologize. Please know that I am reviewing all of the feedback provided in the parent surveys and we will be making adjustments moving forward.

Recently, we were informed that Mrs. Pizzi, Principal of the St. Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Program will be resigning her position as of Friday, November 20, 2020. I want to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Pizzi for all of her efforts in setting up the program and working tirelessly to address the instructional needs of your child(ren). I am most grateful for the time she has given us. I wish her well in her future endeavors.

At this time, I am pleased to announce to you that Dr. Stephen Haessler will assume the position of Principal for St. Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Program. Dr. Haessler brings to our program a rich background in virtual Catholic education.

Below please find some of his accomplishments:

- Currently Chief Academic Officer of the Arrupe Virtual Learning Institute (formerly, the Jesuit Virtual Learning Academy)
- Responsible for program development and teacher formation in online instructional effectiveness
- Experience in online education development since 2008, including teaching AP Microeconomics, AP Macroeconomics, AP Statistics
- Organizer and presenter at Summer Teaching Institute, Strake Jesuit Retreat Center 2016 - present
- Organizer and presenter for the Versatile Classroom, summer 2020 post-pandemic responses to online challenges
- Formerly Senior Fellow at small, Catholic family foundation interested in education, The Robert and Marie Hansen Foundation
- Formerly Economics Chair in Economic Education, Marquette University High School, Milwaukee, WI
- Ph.D. in education, minor in economics: dissertation focus on incentives and outcomes in education
- Fund raising experience

We are very impressed with the work that Dr. Haessler has done and in the short time that we have been working with him, we know that his experiences will greatly assist the St. Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Program.

Dr. Haessler can be reached via email at: principal@stthomasaquinasbq.org

Following the Thanksgiving recess, we will be setting grade level parent meetings to introduce Dr. Haessler to everyone. Please join me in welcoming Dr. Haessler to the St. Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Program.

Sincerely,

Thomas Chadzutko

Thomas Chadzutko, Ed.D.

Superintendent ~ Catholic School Support Services