



January 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

In some ways, investing in a La Salle College High School education for your son(s) has never been harder than it is as we prepare to think about the 2021-21 school year. Nor has it ever been easier. In some ways, the uncertainties of the employment, business, political, and public health climates may incline cautious people to waver before making such a significant commitment. Then you look at your son. As his world has turned upside down these past ten months, you can see the critical role La Salle has played in providing stability for that world—most importantly through relationships, but also through consistent substantive instruction, healthy academic and athletic participation and competition, the soothing and elevating effect of the fine arts on a well-rounded human life, and the spiritual grounding daily prayer, the Eucharist, and the Kairos retreat for seniors can provide. Look at him, and I think it becomes clear: the opportunity is worth the sacrifice.

At its December meeting, the Board of Trustees accepted the recommendation to set 2021-2022 tuition at \$24,980, a 1.75% increase. David Program tuition will rise to \$10,150, also an increase under two percent. A full statement of financial arrangements is included with this letter. Considering our current situation, the Board and I have settled on the lowest dollar amount increase in more than two decades, since the 2001-02 school year, the lowest percentage increase in the over 40 years for which we have records. To put this in context, just a few of you will remember the promise that was made in the 2010-11 school year, after the school needed to take a stark double-digit increase in tuition. Then the assurance was given that tuition would only increase in the 4-5% range each year going forward. By comparison, if we had taken even a 4.5% increase in each intervening year, I would be informing you of a tuition of \$29,168 for the year ending in June 2022. In this area at least, I think we can say we have achieved that elusive goal of “bending the curve.”

Let me address the elephant in the room head on. In a year of unparalleled difficulty and stress, should we take any increase at all? Why not hold tuition flat? Please be assured I would consider that course of action were I not convinced it would ultimately benefit no one except possibly those families completing their involvement with La Salle with the Class of 2022, and that only in a modest financial way. For all others, it would simply be taking a mortgage on their futures—and not at today’s attractive interest rates. Simply put, quality requires **consistent** investment. This year, our investment in renewal

of spent campus infrastructure—things no one can see, like an auditorium heater that served for six decades—requires an expenditure well over a million dollars. Deferring that expense is a recipe for discomfort, diminishment, and failure in the short term, ballooning costs “when we get around to it.” Likewise, our faculty has been so singularly effective in meeting your sons’ academic and personal needs because they have been supported in numerous ways, from technological equipment to professional development through human adaptations like “the Little School.” We cannot constrict that investment, for the sake of your sons’ educational experience and personal development. This modest increase in tuition for next year will help us sustain the equilibrium that is so important to your sons’ future, to La Salle’s future.

Open any newspaper today—through an app or in a version that still uses paper and ink—to see why Catholic schools get coverage outside the Sports section. Sadly, and particularly in the spring, it tends to be because they are closing for the coming year. Programmatic sclerosis leading to a weakened value proposition followed by an enrollment decline, insurmountable demands of deferred maintenance, a technology gap, and community support which has failed to “bridge the gap” tend to be the reasons behind such closures. When La Salle opens our doors for the 2021-22 school year, none of those conditions will apply. Our wonderful alumni are proud of their school and contribute in a fashion that will allow us to assign over \$5,000,000 to need-based and emergency financial aid, not including academic awards. Our teachers and staff continue to sacrifice to be not only good instructors but effective mentors and guides for your sons. Thanks to the impressive number of you who sacrifice beyond tuition to invest in professional development, we are resourced to allow the necessities of today to become the innovations of tomorrow.

Not too long ago, back on December 21<sup>st</sup>, the longest night of the year, the remarkable convergence of Jupiter and Saturn occurred in the night sky, something that has not occurred since the year 1226, an astronomical rarity that some suggest was the Star of Bethlehem. Unfortunately, most of us are preoccupied with other tasks in the early evening, and it was rather cloudy. While anyone could have glimpsed the miracle were conditions ideal, it takes a certain perseverance, a particular attentiveness, a clarity of intention, and sound fundamental knowledge to pick it out on a night like that recent Monday. Not coincidentally, perhaps, those traits are not too dissimilar from those parents will point to as key outcomes desired when explaining why they choose a La Salle education for their sons. Thank you for the continuing privilege of working with you in supporting your sons as they follow their stars which lead them to develop their unique strengths and talents, as they follow the Star of Faith, leading them back to God, the giver of all such gifts.

Faternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brother James Butler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Brother James Butler, FSC  
President