

Adding Value

Even before the economy slowed, value was a crucial concept, as in the current economic buzz words “value added.” For independent schools, adding value above and beyond what public schools offer is essential. After all, parents are choosing to pay for something they can get in the public sector for free.

In a school such as Saint George’s, the added value comes in tangible and intangible forms. Many of the tangible assets are highlighted in this magazine: small class sizes, extraordinary performing arts programs, a no-cut athletics program that provides a team for every aspiring athlete, and advanced courses in mathematics, world languages, and science to name just a few. However, it is the intangible assets that are of highest value.

Teachers who know your children — and can challenge them appropriately — are a rarity and a treasure. I remember my mother’s comment when I first sent my own sons off to school that if your child has one great teacher by third grade, he will be fine. Saint George’s students have great teachers at every step along the way — not just in classrooms, but in our music and art studios, in language labs and libraries, and in each athletics arena. Small classes allow for this challenge to be individualized for the needs of each child.

In addition to teachers, one of the key intangibles is our outstanding group of students. Every student at Saint George’s aspires to, and goes on to, attend college. Every student. In the public sector, sadly, only about one-third of students share this goal. Our students are surrounded by like-minded kids and families who share a belief in the importance of education in life and push each other toward this vision of their future.

This is a powerful motivator for indi-

vidual students, but more than that, it’s a powerful engine for our prosperity as a community and a nation. As Dr. Juan Enriquez, an entrepreneurial biologist, said when speaking to a recent gathering of 4,000 independent school leaders and teachers, “The future of our country does not depend on a bailout. Our future depends on education.”

Well-educated, caring citizens are the added value Saint George’s has to offer, embodied in every graduate who has left our campus and contributed to society over the past 50 years.

— Mo Copeland, Head of School



SGS Board Report – Why It’s Worth It

The theme of this SGS Magazine is “Student Advantages.” As I thought about that topic, I remembered how far we used to drive every day just to get to Saint George’s and why we did it.

You see, when my son first came to the school in fifth grade, we were living south of Newport. Our daily commute to the school was almost 60 miles each way. With after-school events and parent activities, we often made the trip twice in a day. I put an average of 25,000 miles a year on my car.

Why did we do it? Student advantages. I wanted my son to have the best teachers in the area and to develop special relationships with them. I wanted my son to be known in a school, not just by a small group, but by a wide circle of diverse friends, caring faculty, and watchful administrators

who all call him by name. I wanted my son to get to take advantage of the beautiful campus and nearby river — to ride in handmade boats and to study the changing ecology. And I wanted my son to be challenged — not just academically, which he was — but challenged to get outside his comfort zone and take part in plays, art projects, and team sports.

My son is now a senior and about to leave Saint George’s. He is excited and confident about himself and about his future. I credit all the student advantages at Saint George’s with making him that way.

So were all those long drives back and forth to the school worth it? Absolutely, because there is not another school in the area that can come close to providing all the student advantages we have here.

— Wendy Start, President of
SGS Board of Trustees