



October 14, 2020

Dear SBS Parents,

The Board of the GRACE (Growing Access to Catholic Education) Association would first like to welcome back all the returning Families and offer a special warm welcome to all of the new Families here to St. Benedict School.

I wanted to start off by telling you all who we are and what we do. We are a small Parent Organization that is comprised (currently) of parents of children with special academic needs that have been classified through the School as well as thought Monmouth County. That being said, our mission is to provide educational support and needs not only for the Classified and Comp Ed Students, but for the ENTIRE Student Body here at St. Benedict School. Over the past few years, as I have become more involved with this amazing organization, I have heard many misconceptions about GRACE and what it is that we do for the school, ***“GRACE is the place where you go for tutoring”, “GRACE only aids the students with special needs”, or “GRACE is part of St. Benedict Church”***. I can assure you that NONE of these concepts are true! While we are a VERY small association, we have big hearts. Our number one goal is to assist every teacher as well as the entire student body with the things that we can in order to make teaching, not only in the current environment, but in the "normal" environment, better.

How do we accomplish this? Like any other association, we count on fundraisers in order to raise money in order to give back to the community of St. Benedict School. We want to grow this association in order to assist every teacher as well as the entire student body with the things that we can in order to make teaching, not only in the current environment, but in the "normal" environment, better. I know that fundraising can become tiresome to you as parents, so our Executive Board has been working diligently on new and exciting ways to raise money

What fundraising has been done in the past?

- ***The Yankee Candle Sale*** – Unfortunately, due to COVID, Yankee Candle is not able to support this need this year – STAY TUNED for our new and exciting Sale!
- ***Gertrude Hawk East Candy Sale***
- ***Clothing Drive***
- ***St. Patrick's Day Beef & Brew***

- **Monthly Dining to Donate**
- **Unity Day Paper Doll Event**
- **GLOW Party** – 2020 was the first year and the outcome was AMAZING!

What fundraising has been done already this year?

- **St. Benedict Yard Sale** – This sale occurred on Oct. 3, 2020 and we had a lot of positive feedback. **Thank you to all that participated - Stay Tuned for Future Sale Dates**
- **UNITY Day Paper Doll Event** - Currently on-going – This is our Annual Event – UNITY DAY is a national day in support of Anti-Bullying – This year's Moto is ***“Whether in School or at Home, We All Stand Together...So No One Stands Alone”*** – This is a great cause and the kids LOVE seeing their creations hanging in the hall!

You all, the parents and families of SBS, are the reason that these fundraisers have been so successful. Your generosity of genuine love for the St. Benedict Community shows in every event. We could not do this without each and every one of you and for that we are eternally grateful. I would like to show you what your support has done for the St. Benedict Community by naming just a sample of the things we have been able to do with the funds raised:

- ***Provided financial assistance to SBS for necessary “COVID” related classroom accommodations***
- ***Purchased and installed the “Buddy Bench” for the playground for any student to sit at when they need a friend***
- ***Provided books and supplies for teachers to assist in the offset of personal cost***
- ***Sponsored Breakfast for the Reading Rally***
- ***Sponsored Teacher Workshops on a variety of topics to aid in a better and safer teaching environment***

While GRACE does provide some additional support specifically to the children with special needs, I can assure you that our main objective is to find ways to aid all of the students. With all the changes due to COVID the more our children need us. The more helping hands the more we can assist our teachers and children.

“Behind the child that makes the most progress is an actively involved parent”

We, in the GRACE association believe that all children are equal and deserve everything they need to learn and become the BEST ME, they can be!

Thank you for taking the time to read what we are about. Please take some time to look at our website under Parents-Organizations-Grace for all of our information and upcoming events. We are looking forward to another amazing year and hope that this letter finds you all healthy and safe. In the event you have any questions or comments, please feel to reach out to us via email at Grace@stbenedictnj.org.

Kindest Regards,

Executive Board, GRACE