

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

William H. Connolly, Jr.
H'91



I am pleased to tell you that our school has managed another very successful and healthy year. You'll no doubt be as impressed as my Board colleagues and I are with the range of accomplishments that our young men achieved with the talented and dedicated teaching, coaching, and counseling they benefit from every day.

Those of us privileged to serve the school as Board members hear throughout the year of the victories of our sports teams, the talents of our student actors, the prizes won by our writers and journalists and the amazing work stretching the curriculum to span the countries of Asia – representing the far-reaching curiosities and imaginations of our faculty working on yet another multi-disciplinary topic. We take as a given that our young men will gain admission to a range of excellent colleges, as 98 percent did this past year.

For its part, the Board maintained its vigilance on the school's financial health and assisted with a significant re-structuring of the abbey and school's long-term debt, incurred when we renovated extensively and built the first-ever dormitory and a new grammar school building in 1999-2001. While our new students and their families can't imagine St. Benedict's any other way, we remember a school without the Leahy House, or the beautifully re-configured and renovated cafeteria and auditorium in the building appropriately re-named Cawley Hall, after the man whose vision and drive inspired these magnificent improvements.

Two other tasks occupied the Board's attention. One Board member with extensive management consulting experience and an equally talented and dedicated volunteer alumnus enlisted a core of current Benedict's teachers and administrators for a thorough review of the school's organization. They identified the best new leadership to work with Fr. Edwin to move the school into the future. And we conducted a broad search for a new development leader, who possessed the requisite experience and skills to lead the school's next capital campaign. We completed both tasks and believe the results will prove themselves in the next few years.

We vowed this year to examine how we, the Board, can renew and re-charge our own efforts. That exercise has led us to a re-structuring with some new committees that must be as effective in service to the school as our Finance Committee has been. Next year I'll report on how this Board renewal has positioned us to help St. Benedict's move confidently into its new campaign to assure the school's future for many decades. I offer my own thanks to all who help our extraordinary school to continue to work miracles each day.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "W. H. Connolly, Jr." in a cursive script.