

Report to Diocesan Council February 2011

From Dr. Jim Freeman, Headmaster, TMI-The Episcopal School of Texas

I am happy to report that TMI is without doubt in its strongest position since moving to the new campus in 1989. In that year TMI had barely 200 students. Today we are at capacity with 428 and have a growing waiting list for next year. As we reflect on the many rich dimensions of the current TMI experience, consider the following: The quality of our applicants has dramatically increased with entrance scores going up 10-15% a year over the last five years. This year alone inquiries about TMI have gone up 42%, tours of the campus have gone up a whopping 229% and confirmed contracts for the same time last year an incredible 300%. And two thirds of next year's freshman class is coming to us from St. Luke's and St George indicative of the close relationship we have with our parish schools and the strong confidence they have in the strength of TMI. This is particularly a good time to reflect on TMI's success inasmuch as we just finished our ten year reaccreditation process with the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest, and to clearly reflect our Episcopal Identity, the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools. In its summary report, the visiting committee chair, Ned Smith, Head of Episcopal High School in Houston said the following "from the use of Texas limestone in all the buildings to the native plants employed in the landscaping, the marvelous campus is an apt metaphor for a community that is indeed united by a belief in and support of this very special school....TMI is already great and poised to be greater still; future success is certain with the only question being when and not whether."

In his report, Ned went on to give the following commendations.

- The School is to be commended for the deep and abiding love for and commitment to its mission as expressed throughout the entire community, and for honoring and building upon the traditions of its Episcopal and military identities. This commitment to preserving and honoring the unique heritage of the School has resulted in the widespread feeling is that "it is an honor to be a part of this legacy"
- The School is to be commended for the successful recent rebranding effort that better reflects its multiple identities, Episcopal and military, boarding and day. The high quality of the School's seemingly disparate programs, well-integrated as they are into a distinctive and cohesive whole, and the quality of the school's faculty and staff have led to a high level of desire for admission to the School. The School has grown at a time when many similar schools across the country are shrinking, and there has been a steady improvement in the standardized test scores

for each class of new admits as a result. Finally, the School has begun to engage in meaningful conversation around how to manage this change and align mission and practice in this new world.

The reaccreditation process, a process often fraught with anxiety, was rather a joyous occasion to celebrate our unique community, a community that is welcoming, loving, respectful, and sincerely invested in the success of every member.

None of this could have happened without the tireless dedication and support of the TMI Board of Governors and Trustees. I would like to thank them publicly and to give special thanks to our Bishop, and Steve Walker, executive chair of the Board of Governors. Dan Heischman, executive director of NAES has remarked on many occasions how fortunate this Diocese is to have a Bishop so dedicated and involved with its schools.

Finally, I would like to mention the work ahead. We are currently in a capital campaign to improve our athletic facilities, a new practice field, a new track and lighting for the baseball field all of which is underway. But more importantly, the Board of Governors will tackle at their upcoming retreat the issue of long term growth for the school committed to the proposition that TMI as a missionary outreach of this Diocese should be available to as many students as our campus can support.

I consider it a great honor to be a part of TMI and I look forward to working with the Board of Governors in discerning and executing the wonderful plan that God has in store.