

## VIEWPOINTS

**VIEWPOINT POLICY:** The Campbellsport News & Kewaskum Statesman encourages readers' opinions. All letters must include the writer's name, address and daytime phone number. Letters should be kept to fewer than 400 words, are subject to editing and are published at the discretion of the editor. Preference will be given to letters addressing local issues. Each writer is limited to no more than one letter every three months on the same topic. Politically-themed endorsements will not be printed in the issued immediately preceding an election.

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Dear Campbellsport Community,

I wanted to take the time to publicly thank Joan Schlaefer, the principal at St. Matthew Catholic school, and the entire staff, for doing such an amazing job this year to keep my grandsons, and all the other students, in school IN PERSON. I know this was not an easy undertaking, but the benefits for the kids were tremendous.

Of course, there were times when some students had to be quarantined because of an exposure, but they were smoothly included with their classmates in the classroom via Zoom. Plus they received numerous emails from their teachers to keep them up-to-date on their classes and to give them easy access to ask questions.

When I mentioned to other grandparents that I was planning on writing this letter, many wanted to be included in the thank you. Then one thing led to another, and we started discussing the reasons we were so glad that our grandchildren were at St. Matthew.

We are all so grateful and enthusiastic about the school that we thought we would share these reasons with others. The education of children has been a major topic this year, because of COVID restrictions, so we felt that our reasons might be helpful for families who are trying to make the best decisions for their children's future education choices.

These are some of the reasons why we feel blessed that our grandchildren are at St. Matthew: 1. Our grandchildren are receiving a high level of education.

6. Students are trained in self-discipline. With the guidance of the Ten Commandments, and the Bible's emphasis on "loving one another," they learn to make good choices. They are good not just because they follow the rules, but because they are God's children, and they want to follow Jesus's example.

7. The weekly school Mass is amazing. The students do the readings, choose the songs, sing the songs, and write the petitions (prayers for others). If you ever want to start the day off right, just attend one of the school masses. They work so hard to do a good job. This gives them so many important experiences. Even the most bashful child is soon reading and singing with confidence in public. Don't we all wish we had that ability.

8. There is a lot of parental involvement which is wonderful for the children. Paying tuition is a sacrifice their parents are willing to make. Helping with fund raising by students and parents gives them a chance to work together to help cover even more costs. This teaches the children that education is important, and they need to do the best with the opportunities they have been given.

9. Students are taught that they need to share their gifts with the world and help their communities to become the best they can be. In other words, to make a difference in our world.

And FINALLY, they are taught to see the presence of God's love in all they do, not just when they are in religious classes. In this world filled with social media, they have been given the resources to know right from wrong. They have learned how and where to go to get help when they need it. And most importantly, they have learned to treasure every soul God has created.

Your children's education is one of your most important responsibilities. We do not want to interfere with any family's personal decision, but we did want to offer another option for you to consider and, in some cases, reaffirm the decision you have already made to have your children attend our school.

Please feel free to ask any of us to give you more details and personal examples of how our school has benefited us, our children, and now, our grandchildren. If this letter has sparked your interest in becoming a member of our school family, please call our principal, Joan Schlaefer.

Many graduates have excelled at the high school level, in college, and beyond. They have experience with up-to-date technologies, have smaller classes which means lessons can be created to meet the individual class's needs, and any student with challenges can be identified quickly and given extra help.

2. St. Matthew has many teachers who have been there for many years. They are dedicated teachers, who often feel their job is a calling, and therefore they are giving their best to their students.

3. Our school teaches students that they are a part of a community (home, school, their local area, and the world). They are taught that everyone is a child of God, and that means they have a responsibility to help others, respect them, and view them as an equal in God's eyes.

4. The kids are in a stable environment. As a "school family," they celebrate their successes, share their failures, grieve losses together, and most importantly pray together. The students pray certain prayers daily, but they also come together in prayer when something tragic happens, when someone has been given a special blessing, or when the "moment" calls for a prayer of thanks.

5. This school teaches the values we have all held to be true for much of our lives, instead of the values that society thinks are important at this moment.

Although these ideas were written by myself, Joanne Theisen, my fellow grandparents (and great-grandparents) offered suggestions and wanted to be a part of this conversation. For now, the following people have asked to be added to this letter Craig Thull Cy Serwe Joe and Beth Stoffel Janet Melzer Don and Rose Lackas Joan Herriges Denny and Mary Theisen Curt Kissinger and Marg Garvey Kissinger Butch and Rita Thomas Roger and Kathy Morgan Fred and Lois Batzler Ron and Jan Guse Harry and Joanne Theisen Bob and Mary Twohig Since we wanted to have this letter in the paper before the last day of school, we did not have an opportunity to contact more of our school's grandparents, but if we could have, we know the list would be even longer.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this letter. Obviously, we feel very blessed to have our grandchildren in a loving school environment, and we wish the same for everyone's grandchildren, no matter where they are getting their education.

God Bless you all Joanne Theisen