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HYDE NEWSLETTER

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Dear Hyde Community Member:

I. State of the School

We have had a miraculous and somewhat profound experience at Hyde. In the past, students have tended to slip back over vacations into old ways with old friends and unproductive family relationships. For the first time in my experience, students returned with a better attitude and commitment than when they left!

This change was so dramatic, it was noted by virtually all students and faculty. Many students remarked that while it was "rough" at home at first, eventually they had good discussions regarding the evaluations and an overall positive experience. In discussing potential reasons, the most frequent comment was: "Thanksgiving was too short, but this vacation we had time to both rest and reflect". Clearly, the students themselves did some thinking.

Even if the change is not sustained, it is significant and needs to be understood and built upon. The first thing that comes to mind is our new emphasis upon integrating intellectual growth with character growth. Thinking has been stressed more than ever before. School meetings have tended to be very intellectual - we all agree too much so - yet this new emphasis may be helping students work out things for themselves and, therefore, take more control of their lives.

We have also tried to emphasize the concept more than the school. (The Advisory Board is presently working on the goal of completing a written curriculum by next September.) This new focus could account for students having a chance to see things more clearly by being away from school.

Perhaps there are other reasons, but it is encouraging to note that our new emphasis upon academics and intellectual growth may have us on the right track.

II. "Brother's Keeper" and Stealing

We don't have internal locks at Hyde; stealing is unacceptable and something the right application of our character concept will handle.

When I founded the school, we were first able to establish an ethic on lying, cheating and stealing; it was not until the Student "Bust" of 1970 when we fully established "Brother's Keeper" and the no cigarettes - alcohol - drugs ethic. We have a remarkable switch today. We now have a pretty solid foundation for "Brother's Keeper" and have achieved a Hyde cigarette - alcohol - drug free environment; many kids are even considering the role of these substances in their lives away from Hyde. However, we continue to have a problem with stealing! The ethics of our society have definitely changed.

We will be addressing the issue of stealing on a whole-wide community basis, as all of us are involved. Don't fall into the trap of thinking it a matter of catching a few bad kids. The issue deals with the "center of the universe" attitude in all of us. Also involved are concepts of genuine self-confidence, integrity and concern for others, as well as a deeper sense of "Brother's Keeper".

III. Parent Education

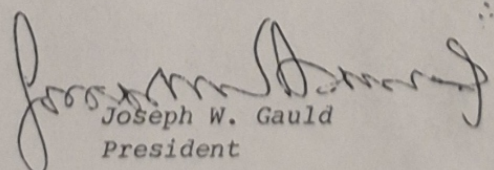
One of our biggest challenges will be trying to provide a crash course on becoming a Hyde parent. We have potentially a fine group of Hyde families, but they are virtually all new. Clearly, we have failed to give them the kind of education and support they need. Faye Chesterton and I are getting out to the regions, but we need the help of veteran parents who will participate in the regions. Please contact us if you are willing to participate, which would be a fine contribution both to Hyde and to your own family. Veteran families need this kind of involvement in order to sustain the concept both for themselves and their children.

IV. Financial Status and Admissions

We will definitely be running operations in the black this year and we will put our entire surplus into improvements. We opened with 96 students and now have 101, with less than 20 Seniors. So admissions for next year looks good. As usual, we will need your efforts to find the right families for Hyde; most of our new students this year came through former families. We are emphasizing that Hyde is the right school for parents who believe family is important and have high expectations for themselves and their kids and for kids who simply don't fit the mold. We will be arranging teas in March throughout the country, so please start thinking of prospective families.

V. Fund Drive

I hope the community realizes that we are presently operating without a Development Officer or a Business Manager, so we simply do not have the normal organization and follow-ups associated with a successful drive. We have to rely upon the depth of your concern and commitment to dig deep and to follow through. At the present time we have nearly \$50,000 in gifts and pledges with a fair number of \$1,000 to \$2,000 gifts. It is encouraging to note the participation of the Alumni - a member of the Class of '72 has just pledged \$7,500 over five years and several other Alumni have pledged a thousand for this year.


Joseph W. Gauld
President