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July 29, 2011

Dear DaVinci Academy Families:

The past year has been a very busy and productive one at DaVinci Academy. Some of the highlights include:

- Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the school, as measured by the Minnesota Department of Education
- Remained fiscally sound, with reserves approaching \$1 million
- Initiated steps, including hiring a dedicated coordinator, to prepare for ninth grade expansion in the 2012-13 school year
- Expanded our teaching staff by 17 new educators
- Added orchestra, band and choir to our arts curriculum
- Completed our \$2 million building expansion project
- Launched our expanded website
- Implemented data driven instruction in math, with plans to expand the program to include reading in the 2011-12 school year
- Added extracurricular activities to our school programming
- Added a positive behavior reinforcement program (“SPARK”)
- Expanded all classroom libraries

School enrollment remained at 375 students throughout the year, with a sizeable waiting list. That will grow to 412 students in the 2011-12 school year. We have assembled a talented and dedicated staff of educators, and plans are being finalized for what we are confident will be an exciting and challenging new school year.

The results of the 2011 Family Survey that many of you participated in have been reviewed by your school board and administration. We received responses from 117 of our 228 families, 51% of stakeholders. This is a lower response rate than we have seen in the past, but we appreciate all of you who took the time to provide us with feedback on the key issues and challenges we are dealing with at our school.

Similar to last year’s survey results, the school received very high marks, across the board, for the job being done and the quality of education being delivered. Once again, our teachers, in particular, received excellent ratings and comments on the job they are doing with our children.

The percentage of “strongly agree” or “agree” ratings remain very high, as you will see in the detailed review below. We remain very pleased with the high marks you have given the school. Following is an overview of each of the survey sections. The

percentages quoted are the “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings by respondents who voiced an opinion on the question.

### Overall Satisfaction

Ratings in this category of the survey were very high, ranging from 87% to 95%.

Highest: My child likes coming to school at DaVinci Academy – 95%

Lowest: The school’s administration provides clear and effective leadership – 87%

### Overall Communication

The school’s communications generally rated very good, ranging from 86% - 95%.

Highest: The weekly newsletter provides useful information – 95%

Lowest: The board provides effective and timely communications – 86%

### School Environment

Families are generally pleased with our school’s environment. However, some concerns were registered regarding discipline practices.

Highest: My student feels safe and secure at DaVinci Academy – 95%

Lowest: The school’s discipline policies are implemented fairly and effectively – 77%

### Overall Educational Experience

The average ratings in this category were 90%. Some concerns were expressed regarding intersessions.

Highest: DaVinci Academy provides an innovative and comprehensive educational experience – 97%

Lowest: (tie) 1. The schools intersessions are worthwhile and enhance my child’s learning experience, and 2. Intersession classes and field trips have been affordable for my child – both 81%

### Student Academic Progress

This category received the highest ratings in the survey, ranging from 97% - 91%.

Highest: The overall school environment promotes learning – 97%

Lowest: My child is being held to appropriate academic standards – 91%

### Transportation

The primary concerns in this area of the survey revolve around three issues:

1. Shorten the ride (add a bus)
2. Concerns about the bus environment – bullying and discipline issues
3. Timeliness of the afternoon bus and parents being late in picking up their children

Steps are being taken to shorten the overall bus ride and deal with discipline issues. You will be seeing more information on our bussing plans in coming weeks.

#### Looking Forward – Issues of Importance

These were ranked as follows, with number one being most important". Overwhelmingly, 40% of respondents, rated the attraction and retention of quality staff as our highest priority.

1. Attract and retain quality staff
2. Further raise the bar on academic standards
3. High school expansion
4. Implementation of more science in the curriculum
5. Implementation of more arts in the curriculum
6. Develop and fund more after-school activities
7. Provide my child with new technology
8. Other issues
9. More parent involvement in school board and committee activities
10. Before and after school child care

#### Strengths/Improvement Needed Comments

Strengths:

- Quality staff
- Phenomenal teachers
- Excellent educational environment

We are proud of the talented educators we have attracted to DaVinci Academy and the strong educational environment we have built and will continue to enhance at our school. We are pleased you recognize the critical importance of these two issues.

Improvement Needed:

- Communications can still improve
- Discipline inconsistent
- Dress code enforcement lax
- Behavioral issues persist
- Intersessions need to improve

An issue that was cited in several areas of the survey, and by our teachers, relates to student behavior and the enforcement of both our discipline policy and our dress code. We are taking aggressive steps to address the discipline issue, with an emphasis on strict enforcement of that policy, for everyone. We have hired a new Student Development Coordinator, Mr. Gregg Eldred, who will work closely with teachers and the administration to ensure our policies are enforced and students are held accountable. Similar attention will be paid to our dress code. Parents, if you have not

already done so, please review both our behavior guidelines and dress code policy, available in the School Handbook on the school's website, with your child. Inconsistent enforcement of these policies will be a thing of the past.

We are also exploring ways to improve both our overall school communications and the intersession opportunities we offer. You will continue to see enhancements to our website, more frequent communications from our school board and revisions to our school newsletter. We appreciate that strong communications are important and we are committed to making that happen. Our administration is also working on making future intersessions more attractive, both in the quality of the subjects covered as well as affordability for everyone. You will see more on that in the coming school year.

### Summary

Overall, our stakeholders continue to voice very strong confidence in the quality of our school and the educational experience being delivered to our children. We appreciate that there are areas where we can improve, and we will continue to focus our attention on those items. We also plan to continue our efforts to enhance our curriculum and increase the academic rigor of our programs, so our students are well prepared to meet future educational and community challenges. We have quality educators, a balanced and challenging curriculum and a building that serves our needs. Great things continue to happen at DaVinci Academy, and we appreciate your support in helping us achieve continued success.

If you have any questions on the survey, please contact any of your board members or our administration. Contact information is available on our website.

Sincerely,

### DaVinci Academy School Board

Terri Sheehan, Chair  
David Cauley, Vice Chair  
Doug Hiatt, Treasurer  
Stephanie Severson, Secretary  
Holly Fischer, Director  
Doug Dinndorf, Director  
Dale Lieb, Director

### DaVinci Academy Administration

Cory Klabunde, School Director  
Terry Moffatt, Academic Director  
Gregg Eldred, Student Development Coordinator