

April 17, 2011

Dear Mrs. Joyner,

This weekend our Elementary Destination Imagination Team went to the State Tournament and we wanted you to know how proud we were of each of the seven children who performed. They represented St. Mary's so well even though they had a major technical disaster during their performance. Our children made us so very proud and I know you would have been as well.

As they began setting up for their performance, a major problem developed. The laptop computer which was an extremely important part of their 8-minute skit would not start-up. At that point, the children basically knew they were in major trouble and that the judges would not score them too well. They could have thrown in the towel and walked away or continue on and act as if nothing was wrong. Being from St. Mary's, you know what they did---they performed their hearts out. Then when they were done, the judges come up from their places in front of the stage area and talked to the children about their performance, props, etc. Each child stood there and answered the judge's questions and explained the laptop problem.

As they cleared their props from the stage area and moved into the hallway, there were tears from disappointment, lots of hugs between the kids and many words of encouragement from the parents. The most amazing part to me was that our children were not blaming others for what happened; instead they acted as one cohesive team. St. Mary's can be so proud of how our kids continued on during the day and became an even stronger team through a very adverse situation.

There were two 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, four 4<sup>th</sup> graders and one fifth grader---but ultimately they were one family. As they proceeded with their "Instant Challenge" later that afternoon, they went into that room with smiles on their faces and represented St. Mary's as well as anyone could have.

I guess the lesson that the children learned was that not everything in life is going to go as planned, but it's how you act during a crisis that shows the true person...our children were champions!!

The lesson we learned as parents is that Destination Imagination teaches our children more than teamwork, leadership and creativity---it teaches lifetime lessons that will be with our kids long after they leave St. Mary's.

A special thank you to Mrs. Harley & Mrs. Sorenson for all their hard work and dedication to the Destination Imagination Program at St. Mary's.

And a really big thank you to Mrs. Gorecki for all her hours of practice and leadership to **the first St. Mary's team to ever go to the State Tournament!!**

All the best,

Tom & Peggy Kaupp