

in sync

June 2022

Principal's Welcome Message

There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you.

There are lots of reasons to feel different.

Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from.

Maybe it's what you eat or something just as random.

Whatever it is, it's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody knows you, but somehow you do it.

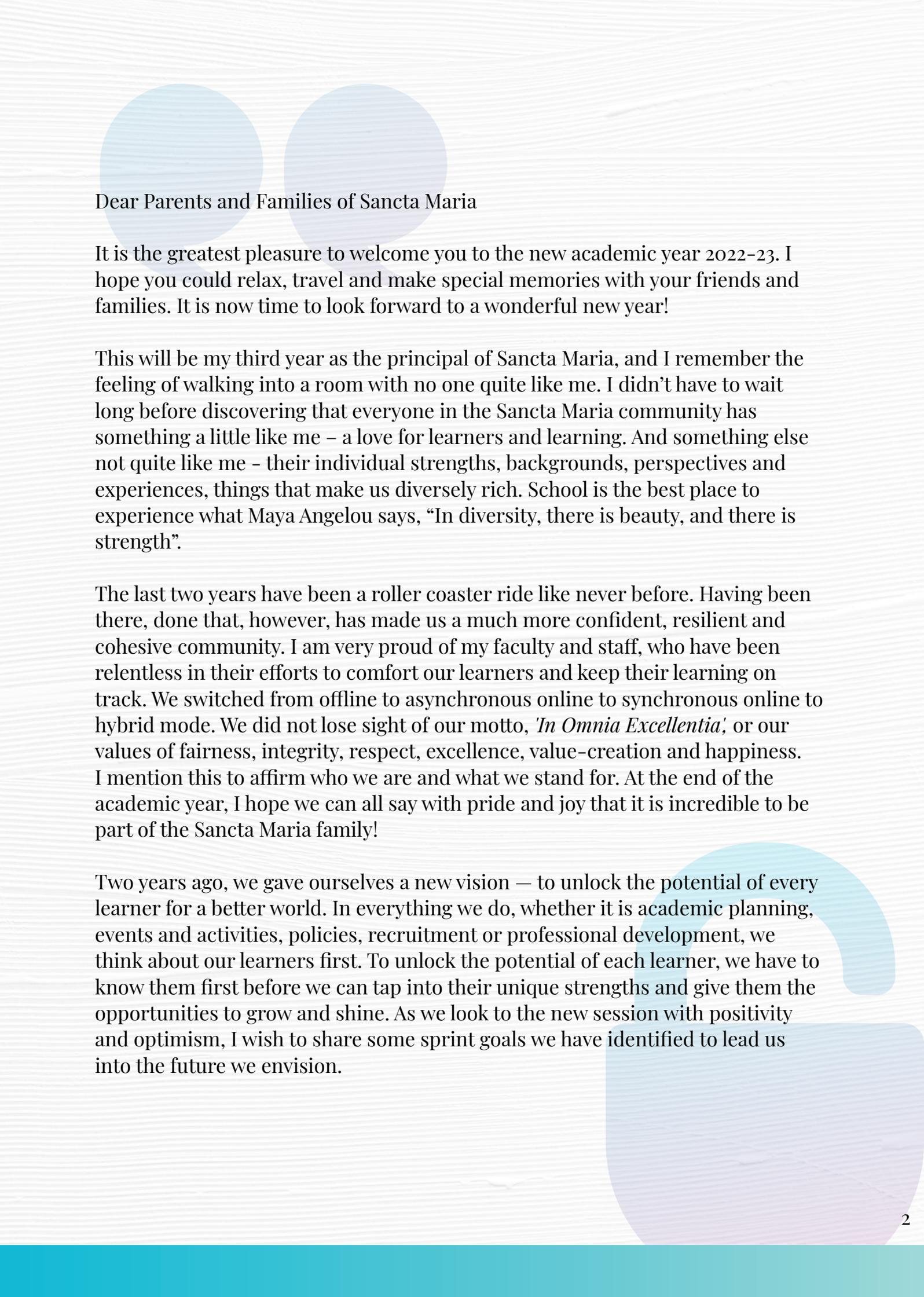
There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you...

...Until the day you begin to share your stories.

This is the day you begin to find the places inside your laughter and your lunches, your books, your travel and your stories.

Where every new friend has something a little like you...and something else so fabulously not quite like you.

An extract from 'The Day you Begin'
by J. Woodson-



Dear Parents and Families of Sancta Maria

It is the greatest pleasure to welcome you to the new academic year 2022-23. I hope you could relax, travel and make special memories with your friends and families. It is now time to look forward to a wonderful new year!

This will be my third year as the principal of Sancta Maria, and I remember the feeling of walking into a room with no one quite like me. I didn't have to wait long before discovering that everyone in the Sancta Maria community has something a little like me – a love for learners and learning. And something else not quite like me – their individual strengths, backgrounds, perspectives and experiences, things that make us diversely rich. School is the best place to experience what Maya Angelou says, “In diversity, there is beauty, and there is strength”.

The last two years have been a roller coaster ride like never before. Having been there, done that, however, has made us a much more confident, resilient and cohesive community. I am very proud of my faculty and staff, who have been relentless in their efforts to comfort our learners and keep their learning on track. We switched from offline to asynchronous online to synchronous online to hybrid mode. We did not lose sight of our motto, *'In Omnia Excellentia'*, or our values of fairness, integrity, respect, excellence, value-creation and happiness. I mention this to affirm who we are and what we stand for. At the end of the academic year, I hope we can all say with pride and joy that it is incredible to be part of the Sancta Maria family!

Two years ago, we gave ourselves a new vision – to unlock the potential of every learner for a better world. In everything we do, whether it is academic planning, events and activities, policies, recruitment or professional development, we think about our learners first. To unlock the potential of each learner, we have to know them first before we can tap into their unique strengths and give them the opportunities to grow and shine. As we look to the new session with positivity and optimism, I wish to share some sprint goals we have identified to lead us into the future we envision.

Wellbeing and safety of learners and staff

We will build on the social and emotional learning programme we initiated last year and develop a stronger classroom community. We are increasing our capacity for wellbeing counselling and supporting learners with special educational needs. We will be rolling out school-wide safeguarding training and practices. Our academic staff has recently completed the formal training on POCSO Act, and the admin team will follow suit. We intend to implement restorative practice as a new, alternative approach to managing disciplinary issues and conflicts and will share more about this in the coming days.

Academic excellence and learning how to learn

We believe all learners are capable of high achievement. Our graduating students will go to prestigious universities in India and abroad. We want to be more intentional about teaching-learning strategies and metacognitive skills such as: formulating good quality questions, note-taking, retrieval practices, and understanding command words and key concepts. For these practices to become habits, we will need reinforcement at home. This year, parent-teacher meetings are planned before rather than after term exams to set learners up for success and take corrective measures in advance.

Home-School partnership

We value our partnership with parents and families and welcome your participation in our learning and enrichment programmes for policy-making and new initiatives. It is also crucial that we are consistent with our messages and practices in school and home. We send out surveys periodically to get to know you better for your feedback and updated details. Kindly make time to complete them. We hope to see you more often this year at Parent Forums, PTMs and key events. We will be requesting volunteers to reinstate the Saturday Academy and be on specific committees and working groups. Please watch this space.

I will conclude with my favourite Winnie the Pooh quote —
"Sometimes, the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."



In the photo are last year's 1A students on a 'tour of the Principal's office', and as you can see, these youngest learners have occupied the most room, both in my office and in my heart.

I have an open-door policy and look forward to speaking with you about any feedback, concerns or questions you may have.

Take care; I hope to meet you soon!

Warm regards

Ruchira Ghosh