

SEPTEMBER 2026

CHAPLAIN'S LETTER

The Quiet Power of Showing Up



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FOR OUR STERLING TEACHERS, STAFF, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES

There is something powerful about simply showing up.

We often notice the big moments - the first day of school, an important achievement, a special celebration, or a moment when something finally goes right. But most of life is not made up of big moments.

It is made up of ordinary ones.

Getting up and coming to school even when you are tired.

Trying again after getting something wrong.

Saying hello to someone who may be having a difficult morning.

Listening carefully when a friend needs to talk.

Doing your best when no one is watching.

These moments may seem small, but over time, they become something much bigger.

By September, the excitement of a new school year has begun to settle into a rhythm. The newness of classrooms and schedules starts to feel familiar. We begin to discover what our days will look like - not just once, but again and again.

And this is often where real growth begins.

More Than One Good Day

A good day is wonderful.

But a good life is not built from one good day.

It is built through many ordinary days, and through the choices we make in them.

A student may not notice how much they are growing because growth often happens slowly. A teacher may wonder whether a lesson made a difference when there was no immediate response. A parent may sometimes question whether the small conversations, reminders, and encouragement at home are making an impact.

Often, we do not see the results right away.

A seed does not become a tree overnight.

A skill does not develop after one practice.

Trust does not grow through one conversation.

Character is not formed through one decision.

The things that matter most are often built quietly, through consistency.

That is why showing up matters.

It means choosing to be present even when the day does not feel exciting. It means continuing to care when the results are not immediate. It means giving ourselves permission to grow slowly rather than expecting ourselves to have everything figured out.

Sometimes the most courageous thing we can do is simply take the next step.

The People Who Make a Difference

Our presence affects other people.

We may never know how much a simple greeting meant to someone. We may not realize that our patience gave another person confidence, or that a few encouraging words helped someone get through a difficult day.

A student who feels noticed may begin to believe that they belong.

A teacher who takes an extra moment to listen may help a student feel that their voice matters.

A staff member who consistently offers kindness may create a sense of welcome without ever knowing how important that feeling was to someone else.

These are not dramatic acts. They may not appear in a report card or receive an award.

But they shape a community.

At Sterling, the kind of community we become is built not only through what we accomplish, but through how we treat one another along the way.

The Beauty of the Ordinary

September reminds us of something easy to forget:

We do not have to do something extraordinary every day to make a difference.

The Beauty of the Ordinary

Sometimes faithfulness looks very ordinary.

It looks like coming to class prepared.

It looks like trying one more time.

It looks like including someone who is standing alone.

It looks like being patient when frustration rises.

It looks like admitting a mistake and beginning again.

These small choices may feel insignificant in the moment.

But one day, when we look back, we may realize that these were the moments that shaped us.

The goal of a school year is certainly to learn new things and accomplish meaningful goals. But it is also to become people who are curious, responsible, compassionate, resilient, and willing to keep growing.

That kind of growth rarely happens all at once.

It happens one day at a time.

A September Invitation

As we move into September, perhaps we do not need to ask ourselves whether we are doing everything perfectly.

Perhaps a better question is:

How can I show up well today?

Can I bring a little more patience?

Can I listen a little more carefully?

Can I encourage someone who needs it?

Can I give myself permission to learn from a mistake?

Can I take one more step when I feel like giving up?

A September Invitation

We may not be able to control everything that happens during this school year. There will be busy days, unexpected challenges, moments of disappointment, and moments of joy.

But we can choose how we meet each day.

And sometimes, that is where meaningful change begins.

So this September, let us not underestimate the power of small things.

A kind word.

A patient response.

A second attempt.

A welcoming smile.

A quiet act of encouragement.

What feels small today may become part of someone else's strength tomorrow.

Thank you to our teachers and staff for continuing to show up with dedication and care. Thank you to our families for the countless ways you encourage and support our students. And to our students: remember that you do not have to have everything figured out. Keep learning. Keep growing. Keep showing up.

There is value in every step.

My door remains open throughout the year. When you need a listening ear, encouragement, or simply a quiet place to pause, I am here to walk alongside you.

May September be a month of steady growth, meaningful connections, and the quiet reminder that the small things we do each day truly matter.

With every ordinary day, we are becoming something extraordinary.

Sincerely,

Chaplain David Park