

[MMU_Faculty] Message from President Schwalbach

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To: 'faculty@campus.mtmary.edu' <faculty@campus.mtmary.edu>; 'administration@campus.mtmary.edu' <administration@campus.mtmary.edu>; 'staff@campus.mtmary.edu' <staff@campus.mtmary.edu>;

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Dear Mount Mary Community,

Over the past several months, the University has completed a detailed and thorough assessment of campus services to ensure that all of our offerings are aligned to provide the best possible educational experience for our students. Several campus centers, including the Childcare Center, were reviewed within a framework of mission fulfillment and resource allocation.

After careful consideration, including feedback from the Mount Mary community in a May 2016 survey regarding usage of our childcare services, and in consultation with the School Sisters of Notre Dame, we have decided to not re-open the Childcare Center for the 2016-2017 academic year. Effective July 15, 2016, the Center will officially be closed.

Last year, the number of children served was well below the Center's capacity. We made adjustments to our operating hours, including closing on Fridays due to low enrollment. However, the Center still experienced a significant financial loss. The most recent survey did not indicate an increased demand that would justify keeping the center open or enlarging it in the area that we had designated in the former bookstore. The cost of renovating the bookstore has increased to over \$600,000, a cost that is not a prudent use of our resources. The survey showed that we would not have enough children to make the expanded facility financially viable, but in fact it would only increase the loss.

While we were making this difficult decision, another opportunity arose. The School Sisters of Notre Dame have asked to use the former bookstore space for their archives. They will assume all of the costs to transform the space into archives that document the history of the sisters in North America. We are excited to strengthen the presence of the SSNDs on campus and to have a research center that showcases their legacy.

Mount Mary will offer transitional support to the parents who planned to enroll their children in the Center for the 2016-2017 academic year, as we know that quality, accessible childcare is of the utmost importance to parents. More details on these offerings have been sent to the home addresses of anyone impacted by this closure.

Please help me in thanking the Childcare Center staff for their commitment to excellence throughout the past several years – we know that they have touched the lives of many children and their families and appreciate their many efforts.

Sincerely,

Eileen Schwalbach, Ph.D.
President