

St. Mary School Newsletter

August 2018

St. Mary School

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Important Upcoming Dates

- 8/15: New Family Orientation @ 5:00 pm (Music room)
- 8/20: First Day of School/
Early Dismissal @11:30 am
- 8/21: Early Dismissal @11:30 am
- 8/22: School Mass @ 8:30am (6F)
- 8/23: Orchestra Open House @ 6:00 pm (Music room)
- 8/28: Picture Day (PS, K, 5)
- 8/29: Picture Day (1, 2, 3, 4, 6)
School Mass @8:30 am (6K)
- 9/3: No School/Labor Day
- 9/7: Knight Wear Dress Down
- 9/8: Dakota Bowl
- 9/10: SFO Meeting @ 6:30 pm (Music room)
- 9/11: Up with People Visit
- 9/30: Fall Festival, 12:00-3:00 pm

FAITH

Rosary: Mondays at 8:10 am
Mass: Wednesdays at 8:30 am
Please join us in St. Mary Church!

*School newsletters will be emailed monthly and can also be found on the SFCS website.
*Important event dates are posted on our Google calendar on the SFCS website.
*Follow us on Twitter @stmarysfcs for updates!

Dear Parents,

As we prepare for another great year at St. Mary School, I am anxiously awaiting the smell of freshly sharpened pencils, the sound of children laughing and playing, and the sight of bright, eager faces ready to learn! Thank you for choosing this faith filled learning environment for your child!

Our mission ***to form a community of faith and learning by promoting a Catholic way of life through Gospel values and academic excellence*** drives every decision we make at St. Mary School. We often think of schools focusing primarily on the mind. However, as a Catholic school, we have the great privilege of attending to the needs of the *body and soul* of each child. Therefore, this year we will be promoting healthy lifestyles in order to improve the students' emotional and physical wellbeing, develop positive relationships with God and others, and increase learning potential.

Areas of focus:

- 1) Our theme is **Scripture** based this year with each teacher choosing verse(s) to integrate into their classroom. Understanding God's Word is essential to our relationship with Him.
- 2) Teachers and staff will be incorporating the **Love and Logic** philosophy into their student interactions. This will assist not only with behavior management, but also peer relationships.
- 3) We will create a **Wellness** committee that will explore ways to promote healthy eating and more movement throughout the day. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and therefore we have an obligation to be good stewards of them.
- 4) We will encourage **positive attendance**. Absenteeism creates delays in learning and can be detrimental to academic achievement.
- 5) We will educate parents and students about **positive choices** for their mind, body, and spirit.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year. We are honored that you would entrust your most precious gift to us and feel blessed to be able to partner with you as we educate the whole child: academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially. I look forward to seeing all of you at our **Open House on Wednesday, August 15th** and at the **Fall Festival on Sunday, September 30th**. Until then, may God abundantly bless you and your family!

Michelle Shields

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Open House

5:00 pm: **New Family Orientation** in Music Room
(Park in South lot on 4th Ave)

5:30-7:00 pm: **Open House**

Classrooms: meet teachers

Gym: SFO- info about Fall Festival
Knight Wear - purchase for dress down days
Lunch table - put money on lunch account
Up with People - purchase ticket for performance

*If you purchased classroom supplies online, they will be waiting for you in the classroom! If not, you can bring them with you that night.

School Family Organization (SFO)

Our SFO is a collaborative school and family organization that meets 4 times/year to inform parents about events, curriculum, fundraising, and school issues. The meeting dates, agendas, and minutes will be posted on our website. Please consider joining us to learn more about our school! Dress down coupons will also be handed out at meetings!

President: Kerry Boetel

VP: Nicki Ellerbroek

Treasurer: Emily Glatt

Secretary: Nicole Barnes

Teacher Representative: Mary T Grogan

Drop Off/Pick Up

During the first several weeks of school,
staff will be assisting in directing traffic and helping families learn this process.

Preschool:

- Preschool drop-off and pick up will be in the cut-out areas along 4th Avenue.
- Use the door by the St. Mary Statue on 4th Avenue to enter the school.

Grades K-2

- The lower playground (south of school/4th Ave) is designed for student drop-off and pick-up.
- Enter from the south and exit to the west. Only one direction traffic is allowed in this area.
- Teachers will assist your child in exiting/entering vehicle.
- Parking is NOT allowed anywhere in that drop-off area. If you need to help your child into the school or leave your car, please park in the residential areas along one of the side streets.

Grades 3-6

- Parents can use the side streets around the school for drop-off and pick-up, but please advise your child to use the crosswalks with patrols to cross the streets around the school. DO NOT DROP OFF YOUR CHILD IN MID-BLOCK AND MOTION THEM TO CROSS IN FRONT OF YOUR CAR. DO NOT BLOCK THE CROSSWALKS OR OUR NEIGHBORS' DRIVEWAYS. DO NOT PARK IN BETWEEN THE CROSS WALKS ON 28TH ST. WHERE IT CONNECTS WITH 5TH AVE.
- Drop-off/pick-up is NOT allowed on the upper playground/Church parking lot. Do not drive onto parking lot from 7:30-4:00 pm.
- Our fifth and sixth grade students serve as crossing guards/patrols. Our patrols are trained to not step into the street when helping others cross. Please help them do their jobs by not parking in/on/around crosswalks and discussing safe practices with your family.
- The school playground(s) is supervised 15 minutes before and after school. Students will be brought into the building at 7:55 am and will be released from the classroom at 3:00 pm.

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Snacks

SFCS utilizes a controlled “**bring-your-own-snack**” program. This is a change from previous years of taking turns bringing snacks. The intent behind the program is for students to have a mid-morning snack in order for them to continue to learn at an optimal level throughout the school day. Snacks that are brought to school must be individually packaged, sealed, a snack-sized portion and labeled with a first and last name.

- **Individually Packaged:** Items should not be brought to school in bulk. Snacks should be brought daily and not stored at school. No eating utensils should be used.
- **Sealed:** Must be either pre-packaged or sealed in a snack-sized Ziploc baggie.
- **Snack-Sized:** Pre-packaged = 1 to 2 oz.; Ziploc: 6 ½ s 3 ¼” 19

Snacks will be limited to the following options:

- Fruit Snacks/Dried Fruit/Raisins (no candy)
- Crackers: Club, Cheeze Nips, Cheez-Its, Goldfish, Triscuits, Wheat Thins (no chips)
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Nutri-Grain Bars / Granola Bars
- Pretzels
- Graham Crackers: Teddy Grahams, Cinnamon Grahams, Honey Maid Grahams
- Beef Stick/Jerky

This list was formulated by certified physicians, parents, and educators. Many factors were considered in the formation of this list including nutritional value, cleanliness, not requiring refrigeration, etc. **Snacks that are free of peanuts, tree nuts, and eggs to protect students with allergies are encouraged;** thus this list is comprised of commonly available snacks free of those ingredients.

Birthday Treats

This year, as part of our mission to promote healthy lifestyles, we will evaluate our birthday celebration policy, and explore ways to focus more on the child and less on the treat! Our goal is for the school to celebrate the birthday child in a special way, eliminating the need for birthday treats. We will discuss this more at future SFO meetings, but here are some points of consideration:

Safety: With 1 in 13 children having food allergies, anyone serving food to children needs to be aware of the potential for a life-threatening allergic reaction. More than 15% of school-aged children with food allergies have an allergic reaction at school. These reactions range from mild to severe and sadly even fatal. The safety of all the students is one of our top priorities.

Inclusion: Sending a birthday treat to school can exclude those children who have allergies, diabetes, celiac, and other dietary restrictions. It can also exclude children who come from families who are unable to afford to send items for the entire class.

Loss of Instructional time: While the St. Mary staff will continue to celebrate your child in ways that will make the student feel supported and special, it is important to protect instructional time. Cutting and serving treats, cleaning up, and handling hurt feelings regarding the treats can take a lot of time!

Health: Many parents have voiced a preference for a “no-food policy” in an effort to promote health, be sensitive to those with dietary restrictions, and to help combat childhood obesity. (Not to mention the benefit of alleviating stress on parents and students having to provide a treat!)

While we transition, if you decide to bring treats, please keep these important points in mind:

- **NO homemade items**
- **Prepackaged with ingredient label**
- **No peanuts/tree nuts**

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Picture Day

School pictures are scheduled for **Tuesday, August 28** for **Preschool, Kindergarten and 5th grade** and **Wednesday, August 29** for **grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 6**. These are Dress Up Days for those getting their picture taken. Picture envelopes will be sent home with the back to school packet. Each child must have his/her own picture envelope with a separate payment in each. Remember to mark your package choice and include your child's name and class.

Lunch Room

Hot lunch begins on August 22. **Fast food, candy, soda and high energy drinks are not allowed in the lunchroom for students or adults.** Sign up at myschoolbucks.com to get notifications and make payments when account runs low. Free and reduced lunch forms will be sent home at Open House.

Immunization/Health Records

Any child entering SFCS for the first time must provide a completed SD Certificate of Immunization. Those students entering **6th grade** are required to provide an updated SD Certificate of Immunization with the additional vaccinations required.

Uniforms

- Shirts must be white and have a collar. They can be long or short sleeve, but should not have any logos.
- Sweaters may be worn, but must be solid colored navy. Information about school sweatshirts will be sent home at a later date.
- Pants must be either navy walking shorts (until October 31 and after April 1) or navy pants.
- Pant guidelines: no decorations, prints, denim, royal blue color, jogging pants, or cargo/capri/carpenter styles. **Pants should not be excessively tight. Leggings may not be worn as pants.** Preschool - 2nd grade girls may wear navy blue stretch pants (ankle length)
- Girls may wear skirts, skorts or plaid jumpers. However they **MUST** be purchased through Dennis Uniform. <https://www.dennisuniform.com/schools/PM8>. Girls may wear white, black or navy leggings WITH their skirt, skort or jumper.
- Students must wear white, navy or black socks with their shoes or sandals with a back strap. Clogs and boots are not allowed.
- Hair color should be of a natural shade (no blue or pink!). Makeup is also not allowed.

Child Care

- Before School Care begins August 20, 7:00-7:40 am.
 - After School Care begins August 22, 3:00- 6:00 pm.
- Extra Days Contract for August 20 and 21 is included in this newsletter. Please return by **August 7th**.

Visitors

During school hours access to the school building will only be through the east gym door or south primary door. Please ring the bell—we have camera and voice identification. All exterior doors will be locked after 8:00 am. We ask that all visitors check in at the office.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Promoting positive peer relations is a priority in our school. Respect of oneself and others is expected, whether in the classroom, hallway, lunchroom, or playground. Bullying or being rude to another student or teacher will not be tolerated. Parents will be notified if a student cannot conform to behavior expectations. Please refer to the parent/student handbook for further details on behavior expectations.

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2018-2019 St. Mary School Staff

Pastor	Fr. David Desmond	Specials	Art Band Computer Counselor Library Orchestra PE Vocal	Jenica Haraldson Sharla Larson Chris Isaacson Tali Paulson Deb Picasso Kortney Temple Derek Robey Kevin Humke
Office	Michelle Shields, Principal Becky Basche, Administrative Assistant Derek Robey, Administrative Assistant	Academic Services		Amy Isaacson Michelle Estes, Sparks Sue Monick, Beacons
Preschool	3 year olds Mary Ann Andress, teacher Rose Smit, EA 4 year olds Jordy Bosseler, teacher Donna Matzen, EA 5 year olds Becky Kayser, teacher Jill Chapman, EA 5 year olds Halle Cronin, teacher Shelly Starr, EA	Educational Assistants		Cathy Bohms Julie Fischer Jackie Prostrollo Cathy Rounds Tracy Struwe
Kindergarten	Amy Caba Jill Casey	Lunch Program		Mary Beth Piatt, Head Deb Picasso, Cashier Steve Strouth Cheryl Falk Diane Greene
First grade	Anita Hoffman Jordan Osterberg	Before/Aftercare		Jordy Bosseler, Coordinator Mary Ann Andress Diane McComber Eric Abels Michaela Abels Oliver Barnes Mary Maloney Jordan Osterberg
Second grade	Grace Eisenberg Mary T. Grogan	Custodians		Jim Volk, Head Morena Lemus
Third grade	McKenzie Docken Leann Schlotterback			
Fourth grade	Maddy Grogan Sr. Carmella Luke			
Fifth grade	Jen Mieras Katie Travis			
Sixth grade	Jeanice Finnegan Ann Krier			

Attendance Matters at St. Mary School

Why is school attendance important?

- By not coming to school, students diminish the value of their education, and the benefit of regular classroom instruction is lost.
- Student may not develop the responsibility, self-discipline & effective work skills that are taught in the classroom.
- If students fall behind and are continuously struggling to catch up, this may diminish their confidence and attitude toward learning.
- Students who attend school on a regular basis are likely to perform better on standardized tests.
- Not coming to school and being truant results in higher crime rates and lower future earning potential.
- State law requires the attendance of all children between the ages of 6 and 18.

What can parents do to help their children get to school?

- Know that school attendance is a parent and student responsibility.
- Do not allow your child to persuade you into making an excuse for him/her.
- Keep a school calendar on the refrigerator at home so that you know when your child does and does not have school.
- Make sure your child arrives at school on time daily. **School begins promptly at 7:55am**
- Understand that while Preschool has options for 1-5 half and/or full days, **grades K-6** are contracted as **5 full days**. Curriculum is established based on this time frame.
- If possible, drop your child off at school and pick them up afterwards.
- Provide an alternate plan of transportation for getting your child to school on time.
- Set a regular bedtime schedule.
- Provide your child with plenty of time to get ready for school.
- **Schedule medical, dental, and other appointments before and after school hours, when possible.** If your child must be out of school part of the day, allow him or her to miss only that time necessary for the appointment.
- **Schedule family vacations during school vacations.**
- Try to stay involved in the school by attending meetings, field trips, etc. when possible.
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of being late or absent.
- Talk to your child about issues that may be making them late for school.
- Keep in touch with who your child's friends are and their interests.
- Make a contract with the child to improve their attendance rate.
- Help your child to understand the attendance policy of the Sioux Falls Catholic Schools and the state attendance law of South Dakota.
- Contact the school to ask for help/suggestions.
- Don't give up, reward good behavior and take it one day at a time.