

August Parent Letter 2018

August 1, 2018

Dear Parents and Friends of All Saints,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 academic year!

As we prepare for the new year, I wish to extend a warm welcome to those families who have just joined our All Saints community! We are delighted that you have chosen a Catholic education for your children and even more pleased that you have selected All Saints. Again, welcome to our All Saints family!

I also wish to extend a word of welcome to our new faculty/staff members:

Mr. James Kontoes (Middle School Social Studies/7th Grade Homeroom) - Mr. Kontoes joins our faculty after having taught religion and social studies at St. Ann School in Arlington for the past nine years. Mr. Kontoes earned a Bachelor of English Degree from the University of New Hampshire and a Masters in Education from Boston College. With a great love of the Catholic faith and an ability to present lively and engaging history lessons, Mr. Kontoes will be a wonderful addition to our middle school program.

(Note: This year Mrs. Melissa DeBruyne will be an 8th grade homeroom teacher which will provide even greater opportunities for integration of reading and language arts as she works closely with her grade partner, Mrs. Lisa Kessinger.)

Mrs. Patrice Snowden (School Nurse) – Mrs. Snowden earned her Bachelors of Science in Nursing from the College of New Jersey. With additional credentialing as a Certified School Nurse from the State of New Jersey and prior experience from her years at St. Timothy School in Chantilly, Mrs. Snowden will bring a high level of competency and expertise to her role in our school.

Mrs. Sandra Weitendorf (Cafeteria Bookkeeper) – Formerly a first grade assistant, Mrs. Weitendorf is transitioning to the position of cafeteria bookkeeper. With an eye for detail and an understanding of the program from her many years both as a volunteer and

assistant in our school, she will be a great asset to our cafeteria staff.

Mrs. Floribel Fleisig (On-Call Cafeteria Assistant) – Mrs. Fleisig joins our cafeteria staff as an on-call employee and substitute to assist as needs arise related to special events and food preparation. Having volunteered in the kitchen for several years, she is already very familiar with our procedures and will be a wonderful support for the cafeteria program.

Mrs. Cyndeadelfa Garcia (Extended Day Assistant) – Mrs. Garcia joins our Extended Day staff with prior experience as both a private caretaker as well as a teacher assistant at the Congressional School of Virginia. Mrs. Garcia is a founding member of the St. Gabriel Mission where she has assumed a number of leadership roles. With a strong commitment to the mission of our parish and school, she will be a terrific asset to our program.

Mrs. Deborah Weber (Extended Day Assistant) – Mrs. Weber is a former member of the United States Air Force where she worked in an administrative capacity. Since that time she has been highly active in our parish and a frequent volunteer in our cafeteria program. With a familiarity with our school routines as well as our students, she brings a great deal of experience to her role in the Extended Day program.

Miss Paige Hockman (Pre-Kindergarten Extended Day Assistant) – For the past three years Miss Hockman has worked at Powell Wellness Center where she has supervised children ranging from infants to middle school students. Miss Hockman is very excited to join our new Pre-K Extended Day Program and recognizes it as an opportunity to combine two of her favorite things – her Catholic faith and working with children.

Interviews for a new resource teacher for grades PK-3 are continuing at this time. I look forward to providing you updates regarding this position as well as that of the first grade assistant as they become available.

Programs & Innovations for 2018-2019

Trimester Calendar

As announced during the spring semester, in accordance with diocesan policy, All

Saints will be changing to a trimester schedule during the upcoming year. Although the length of the academic year remains unchanged, the grading periods will be divided into three trimesters rather than four quarters.

New Reading Series (K-8)

This year we will be adopting the *Lucy Calkins' Units of Study Program* for K-8 as recommended by the faculty reading/language arts committee. This new approach which is research-based and anchored in the methodology of "reading workshop" will enable us to further differentiate learning while fostering a lifelong love of reading in our students.

Extended Day for Pre-Kindergarten Students

In response to growing demand, we will be offering after-care for Pre-Kindergarten students with services available from dismissal until 6:30 p.m. each day of school. The Extended Day for Pre-K will take place in Mrs. Theresa Parriott's classroom and will be coordinated by Mrs. Alejandra Reyes who will serve as the Program Leader under the direction of Ms. Ceil Reardon. Registration forms and information regarding fees will be forwarded to Pre-Kindergarten families in the days ahead.

New Computers

The four year lease on our computers expires this summer. With this in mind, we are upgrading all office, classroom and student computers in advance of the new year. One of the infrastructure changes will be that teachers will receive laptops that will be configured with their ACTIV Boards. The portability of the laptops will allow for faculty to use them in meetings, professional development workshops and other off-site work. We anticipate that the installation of the new computers will be completed around the middle of August.

I am also pleased to share with you that the middle school team has been working diligently behind the scenes in support of several new initiatives aimed at strengthening middle school culture, expanding opportunities for STEM learning and continuing our focus on mathematics. I look forward to sharing more details about these programs early in the new year.

On the topic of math, I wish to share that we will not be renewing our subscription to Ten Marks, an individualized online learning program. Due to the fact that the program

will no longer be available in 2019, I believe that we would be assuming too much risk as the company will no longer be providing customer service as they phase out the program in the year ahead. Mrs. Horgan and several faculty members have begun the process of identifying a possible replacement program, an effort that will continue into the new year.

Important Reminders

Orientation Day for Students in Grades K-8 (Friday, August 24th from 9:00 a.m. to noon)

This day provides you and your child the opportunity to meet the teachers and visit classrooms. The classrooms will be open for visits until 11:00 a.m. while cafeteria ticket sales and distribution of school calendars and other information will continue in the gym until noon. Parents who ordered supplies through the school-organized program may pick them up on Orientation Day in the classrooms. All students are asked to come to school prepared with supplies on the first day of classes. On Orientation Day, parents/visitors are invited to park in either the front or rear parking lots.

- New families are invited to arrive early on Orientation Day. Faculty and staff will be available to greet you and guide you through the school beginning at 9:00 a.m. Returning families are asked to begin arriving at 9:30 a.m.
- Throughout the course of the morning, you are asked to keep your children with you at all times since the teachers will be occupied with meeting new students and will not be available to supervise the children.

First Day of School for Grades K-8 (Monday, August 27th)

8:00 Morning Bell

8:05 Classes Begin

Since you will already have had the opportunity on Orientation Day to meet the teachers and visit classrooms, parents are asked to drop off their children in the carpool line by 7:58 a.m. Students will enter the building via the breezeway connecting the new facility to the original wing and report directly to their homerooms. The breezeway doors will open at 7:40 a.m. at which time the cars in the front of the carpool line will begin dropping off students at the direction of patrols and the supervising staff. Any child dropped off before 7:40 a.m. must be escorted by a parent or guardian to the Extended Day Program in Father Kelley Hall.

Dismissal will occur at noon on Monday for students in grades Kindergarten through eight. Dismissal for grades 1-8 will be at 3:00 p.m. for the remainder of the week. However, the Kindergarten program will dismiss at noon for the entire first week of school.

Dismissal Procedures

Parents will once again be assigned one of five parking areas for afternoon dismissal based upon where their last name occurs in the alphabet. Parking assignments for the new year will be posted on our school website in the coming weeks. Additionally, copies of the procedures for afternoon dismissal as well as parking assignments will be available on Orientation Day. All parents are asked to review these items prior to the first day of school. Parents whose children will be walking to and from school are asked to provide written authorization to the office on Orientation Day.

In an effort to ensure the safety and security of our students, children will only be released to their parents via the organized dismissal system. Only parents completing volunteer hours during the school day, as well as those who are parents of Safety Patrols or students attending after-school activities, are permitted to park in front of the church at the time of dismissal.

Immunizations

Virginia law requires that parents of students enrolling in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or first grade provide documentation of appropriate immunization for measles, mumps, and rubella. Additionally, all children who have not received a complete series of hepatitis B vaccine will be required to receive such immunization prior to entering the 6th grade. In accordance with the immunization requirements for the State of Virginia, all 6th grade students must receive a Tdap booster before returning to school in the fall.

Please be aware that providing documentation of immunization is a necessary condition for enrollment at All Saints. Those students who have not received proper immunization will not be permitted to attend school. Should you have any questions about immunization requirements, please contact our school nurse, Mrs. Snowden, at 703-368-4400.

Background Checks – Policies for School Parent Volunteers

As part of the diocesan initiative to maintain a safe environment for all of our children, all

volunteers in the school are required to complete a background check prior to working in the school and to complete VIRTUS training within 45 days of commencing service.

In accordance with diocesan policy, full compliance for an adult parent volunteer is not required for *open* events. (An open event is one that is open to the public, infrequent and publicized, such as Field Day, concerts and special events/assemblies.) However, full compliance is required for adult parent volunteers who wish to participate in closed events. (A closed event is one that is not entirely open to the general public such as classroom activities, parties, field trips, etc.)

For this reason, all parents who wish to attend field trips or volunteer in support of classroom activities are required to complete the background check process and attend VIRTUS training.

As it typically requires approximately six weeks for the diocesan office to process completed forms, parents are encouraged to complete this paperwork prior to the start of the new year if interested in volunteering in the school during the fall. Those who have not yet completed the background check process may request a packet of forms from either the school or parish offices.

Information for Pre-Kindergarten Families

All Pre-Kindergarten parents and students are cordially invited to attend an informal gathering on the playground on Thursday, August 9th beginning at 4:00 p.m. Parents and students are also invited to a special Meet & Greet with the teachers and staff on August 30th from 8:00-11:00 a.m. and 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. The first day for the Pre-Kindergarten will be Tuesday, September 4th.

Information for Kindergarten Families

Parents who have a Kindergarten starting at All Saints this year are invited to a special orientation meeting on Thursday, August 23rd at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Activity Center. Mrs. Katherine Izquierdo and Mrs. Julie Feltman will present an overview of the program and will be available to answer questions.

Back to School Night

Back to School Night (Parents of Grades 1-5) & PTO Meeting – Wednesday, September 5th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Activities Center. Following an

opening presentation and introduction of the PTO Board, teachers in grades one through five will present an overview of their programs in their classrooms.

Middle School Back to School Night (Parents of Grades 6-8) – Thursday, September 13th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Activities Center.

These sessions will provide parents with important information about our many programs and plans for the 2018-2019 school year. For this reason, at least one parent from each family is required to attend Back to School Night.

Welcome Back Barbecue

All school families are cordially invited to attend the **14th Annual Welcome Back Barbecue** hosted by the PTO. This popular and well-attended event provides a wonderful opportunity for families to visit with friends old and new as we begin another year together. Once again this event is free of charge, courtesy of the PTO. The evening begins at 5:30 p.m. on August 24th and will take place on the parking lot and grassy area located behind the school. Parents are asked to park in the front lot and to either walk around the school or pass through the breezeway entrances when arriving for the event. Families are asked to bring lawn chairs and a cooler full of favorite drinks. (Non-alcoholic beverages only) Although there is no need to RSVP, should you have any questions or wish to volunteer to assist with the event, please contact Mrs. Floribel Fleisig at ffleisig@hotmail.com. Volunteers are still needed to assist with set-up, serving and clean-up. Plan to join us for an evening of barbecue and fellowship!

In the weeks preceding the opening of school, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 703-368-4400. We look forward to seeing you in the new year and, again, a very warm welcome to our new faculty, staff & families!

In Christ,

David E. Conroy, Jr.
Principal