

SSJ School News

August 24, 2021 — Issue #1



— Saints Simon and Jude Mission Statement —

Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary we at Saints Simon and Jude School, commit ourselves to learning, proclaiming and living the Good News of Jesus Christ. We strive to educate and develop all for Catholic leadership in the church and community, enabling one another to serve with Compassion, Courage and Competence.

Letter from Sister Regina

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope everyone had many opportunities to enjoy these days of summer. It was so nice to see many of our children participating in our first Summer Explorers Camp. We had a great turnout and the children all enjoyed themselves. I am grateful to our faculty who planned and conducted the camps.

We welcome back all those families who were enrolled in Saints Simon and Jude School last year and extend a very sincere welcome to those families who are joining our school family for the first time. I know you will experience the awesome spirit that exists here at SSJ.

We welcome our new faculty and staff members: Mrs. Becky Schmid (preK 3 aide), Miss Mary Lastowka (preK 4 aide), Miss Giana Buoni (room 13), Miss Kara Tomasello (room 6), Mr. Mark Griffith (room 7), Miss Dakota Graham (room 18), Miss Jennie McIntyre (music), and Miss Blair McNamara (IU speech). I look forward to all they will share with our SSJ Family.

Last year brought many challenges as we lived through the pandemic. We were SSJ strong and had a successful year due to the efforts of faculty, staff, parents, and students working together. We know that we are not through the pandemic yet. We hear that even fully vaccinated people may contract Covid. To ensure the safety of all our children (who may not have the opportunity to be vaccinated), faculty, and staff, the entire SSJ school community will begin the school year wearing masks. The Chester County Department of Health weekly data report indicates that we are at the substantial level in the county and masks are required. We did not have any in-school transmission of the virus last year and that remains our goal for the 2021-2022 school year. We will continue our sanitizing practices and maintain 3 feet of social distancing in classrooms.

We will continue to use the four lunch periods that we initiated last year. We plan to use the lunchroom, with fewer children at each lunch, and enough room at the tables for social distancing. When the children are outside, masks will not be required. Mask breaks will continue in the classroom. I have been informed that masks will be required on the buses.

We will no longer be doing temperature checks at the entrances. We ask each parent to do a health check prior to their child/ren coming to school. If your child is not feeling well, please keep your child home.

At this time, we will not resume our all- student gathering in the gym for Morning Assembly. Upon entering the building, the children will go directly to their classrooms.

Classwork/homework will be posted on Google Classroom if a child is sick or needs to be absent for another reason. If a child needs to quarantine, they may attend class virtually. If a whole class needs to quarantine then the eLearning plan will be followed.

I do realize "to mask or not to mask" is a divisive issue right now. I know some will be disappointed that we are starting the school year with masks. As conditions hopefully improve, we will continue to follow the directives of the Chester County Department of Health and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. I ask your support and understanding as we continue to work toward the safety of all children, faculty, and staff and aim to keep our school open for in-person learning.

I am grateful to all our faculty, staff, parents, and children for all you do to make SSJ the wonderful, Blue Ribbon School of Excellence it is. As we continue to work together we will remain SSJ strong.

Please [click here](#) to read a letter from Dr. Andrew McLaughlin, Secretary of Elementary Education, regarding the opening of the 2021-2022 school year.

Sincerely,
Sister Regina

Faculty Goodbyes

Since our June Newsletter, Miss Alexandra Lake, 7/8th grade teacher and Miss Meghan McCarthy, who was going to be teaching 3rd grade, will not be returning for the 2021-2022 school year. We thank Miss Lake and Miss McCarthy for all they have shared with our children. I know you join me in wishing them well in their future endeavors.

Miss Dakota Graham is the new 8th grade teacher. The 3rd grade teaching position is in process. You will be notified as the position is filled.

Back-to-School Nights

This year our Back-to-School Nights will all be virtual. Teachers will send you a recording of the curriculum and classroom information prior to your assigned virtual Back-to-School Night. Your child's teacher will send you a link to log-in to the meeting on your assigned day and time. This will be an opportunity to ask for clarifications or any questions you may have. In order to accommodate families that have more than one child the following schedule is presented.

Tuesday, September 7: 6:30PM - Kindergarten
 7:00PM - Grade 1
 7:30PM - Grade 2
 8:00PM - Grade 3

Wednesday, September 8: 6:30PM - Grade 4
 7:00PM - Grade 5 and 6
 7:30PM - Grade 7
 8:00PM - Grade 8

Monday, September 13: 6:30PM - PreK

Welcome Back Social

Please mark your calendars for our Welcome Back Ice Cream Social on Thursday, September 9 at 6PM in the school yard. Please park in the church lot. Thank you to our SSJ Peace Committee and Home and School Association for hosting this event!

Important Back-to-School Information & Reminders

- Students may bring a water bottle to school each day. Water bottle filling stations were installed over the summer and will allow students to refill their water bottle.
- There will be an 11:45AM Dismissal on Tuesday, September 7. Lunches will be needed on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Hot Lunch will begin on Monday, September 13. Lunch orders are due on Thursday, September 9. The menu will be emailed this week.
- A snack will be needed on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Pretzels will begin on Monday, September 13. Pretzel orders are due by Thursday, September 9.
- CARLINE - (Preschool - Grade 8) Morning Arrival - Children may be dropped off in the back of the school at the STOP sign from 7:50AM- until 8:20AM. From 8:00AM until 8:20AM, children may also be dropped off at the main school door.

CARLINE - (Preschool-Grade 8) Afternoon Dismissal - As we begin this school year, we will still have two dismissal sites for afternoon carline dismissal. If a family has only 1 child registered in SSJ, then parents/grandparents will pick their child up at the front of the church. If on any given day, you are picking up more than 1 child, a neighbor, classmate, etc. you will still go to the church site. Should you arrive early please park in the parking lot until the children arrive. When the children arrive please form a single line and proceed to the front of church. Teachers will accompany the children to the dismissal site.

Parents/grandparents who are picking up 2 or more registered children will proceed to the main school door and form two lines. If on a given day, you are picking up only 1 child in the family you will still go to the main school door. Teachers/staff will monitor dismissal.

Remember the pick-up site is determined by the number of children in the family attending SSJ. The site does not change if you are picking up more or less than the registered number in your family.

- This information (and more) can be found on the school website under “Summer Resources” by [clicking here](#).
 - Yearly Calendar – This calendar lists the school holidays, early dismissals, and events.
 - School Supply List
 - CARES Before and After School Program – CARES will begin on Monday, September 13. You can register for CARES on the school website. Please note, we cannot keep a child in CARES without a registration form.
 - Information on Securing Volunteer Clearances – Please be sure you have all the necessary clearances to volunteer at SSJ. Mrs. Candy Savarese oversees these compliances and she can be reached at csavarese@simonandjude.org.
- Absence Excuse Forms (return when child is absent) – Available on the school website under [Forms](#) in the Parents section.
- SCRIP is an easy way for SSJ families to save on their tuition bills. SCRIP gift cards or certificates can be purchased and used in participating stores. A percentage of the purchase price will be credited toward your tuition bill and a smaller percentage goes back to the school. To open an account, email SCRIP Co-coordinators, Tara Foret and Alanna Barry-McCloskey at ssj.scrip@gmail.com to receive the SSJ enrollment code, and then you can set up your account at www.shopwithscrip.com.

Homeroom Teachers

Below you will find links to Back-to-School Paperwork. On some of the forms, you are asked for your child(ren)’s homeroom. Here is a list of homerooms and teachers. If you have any questions about your homeroom assignment, please contact the school office.

PreK 3	Mrs. Kinka	PreK 4	Ms. Mauer
K1	Mrs. Land	K2	Mrs. Glatts
Room 1	Mrs. Clarke	Room 11	Mrs. DiFlorio
Room 2	Ms. Zemruski	Room 12	Miss Stenson
Room 3	TBA	Room 13	Miss Buoni
Room 4	Miss Sullivan	Room 14	Mrs. Farrell
Room 5	Mrs. Kelly	Room 15	Miss Whoriskey
Room 6	Miss Tomasello	Room 16	Mrs. Langdon
Room 7	Mr. Griffith	Room 17	Ms. Lehane
Room 8	Mrs. Dryfoos	Room 18	Miss Graham

Back-to-School Paperwork to Be Returned

Please download these forms to your computer, type in content, print ONE sided, sign areas where a signature is required, and **return to school on your child’s first day of school**. If you prefer to fill out the forms by hand, print and then do so. If you need a paper copy of all the forms, please email Maureen Conlon at mconlon@simonandjude.org and arrange for a pick up time at school.

(One per STUDENT) Form

- Emergency Medical Information Form – [Click here to download PDF document](#)
This form is used for reference in the nurse’s office.

(One per FAMILY) Forms – [Click here to download PDF document](#)

- Family Information Sheet – This form is used for quick reference in the main office and also to create the School Directory. (School Directories will be sent home in October.) If you do not want your name, address, e-mail, or phone number listed in the directory, contact Maureen Colon at mconlon@simonandjude.org with the information you would like listed.
- Photo/Media Release Form
- Loan of Textbooks, Instructional Materials , and Equipment Form
- Virtual Classroom Video-Audio Recording Acknowledgement Form
- Archdiocese Office of Catholic Education Covid-19 Waiver
- Responsible Use Policy for Technology Form – Please read fully as you and your child in grades 3-8 sign. Preschool-grade 2 children do not need to sign. Parent signature will suffice.
- Student/Parent Handbook Signature Form – [Click here](#) to access the Saints Simon and Jude Student/Parent Handbook on the school website.
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Homeroom Parent Volunteer Form
- Pretzel Order Form – If you wish your child (grades PreK-8) to receive a pretzel during morning snack for September and October please fill out the form and check your FACTS prepaid account balance. Pretzels will begin on Monday, September 13 so order forms MUST be returned no later than Thursday, September 9 (K-8) and Friday, September 10 (PreK). No exceptions can be made.

Prayer Requests

- For Mrs. Lori Colgan, mother of Jimmy (room 17), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand grant her a complete and speedy recovery.
- For Mrs. Nicole DiDomenico, mother of Tyler (room 15) and Nolan Leonhard (room 2), who is recovering from surgery. May Christ's healing hand comfort her and grant her a complete recovery.

We are happy to pray for the needs of our school family. If any family has a prayer request please send it to srelinich@simonandjude.org.

Other SSJ Happenings

- [Click here](#) for The SSJ Relief Fund 3rd Annual Golf Tournament information on September 13 at Concord Country Club. This event is being planned by a great group of SSJ parishioners who are committed to helping other parishioners in need. Thank you for your support!
- Cub Scout Pack 168 is now accepting registrations for all boys and girls Grades K through 5! Want to learn more about family cub scouting? Check out our table on Sunday, September 12th from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., directly following Mass at Saints Simon and Jude or join us for our first Pack meeting of the year on September 23, 2021 at Oakbourne Park from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Build relationships, make friends, learn important life skills, enjoy camping and other fun, outdoor activities! Become a Cub Scout! ALL BOYS AND GIRLS ARE WELCOME! For more information, contact Kristin at 610-202-6439 or Chris at 610-742-2289. [Click here](#) for a flyer with more details.

A Student's Prayer for a New School Year

Lord Jesus, I ask for Your help as I begin this new school year.

Allow me to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before me.

Open my eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings.

Open my heart and mind to new friends and new teachers.

Give me a generous spirit to be enthusiastic with my studies and courage to accept new opportunities.

Help me to be attentive to my teachers and let me experience Your presence in my new friends.

Jesus, inspire me to do my best this year! Amen.

