

+ Blessed Sacrament



School News



Learning to Make a Difference

October 29, 2020

Dear Parents,

It has been an exciting couple of weeks since our last newsletter! The auction was a tremendous success despite the challenges we are facing this year, and we are all so appreciative for the volunteers who helped plan and execute the evening along with all those who supported the event.

This week, we have been celebrating Red Ribbon Week with encouraging messages and themes about making healthy choices for our bodies and showing charity to others. We finish the week with our modified Halloween celebrations, and we appreciate all the donations towards these events.

Thank you for all your support of the Catholic Schools Food Drive--our entryway is full of food to be picked up next week, and I loved seeing the humility in the students as they gave so generously.

Veterans' Day is around the corner, and we will have students wear red, white, and blue shirts with uniform bottoms on Wednesday, Nov. 11 as we honor all our veterans.

We will also see many of you next week for parent-teacher conferences. Please remember that students are NOT in attendance on Thursday or Friday of next week. Have a happy, safe, and healthy Halloween!

Yours in faith,
Mrs. Dawn Klinner

Nov. 1 Requirements for PPE and Dress Code

Given the number of positive COVID cases in our community, the conflicting information regarding types of face coverings, and the tremendous desire to continue in-person instruction while keeping ALL the students and staff safe, **we will no longer allow neck gaiters to be used as face coverings at BSS effective November 1, 2020.** IDPH updated their guidance on 10/27/20 by citing that the CDC does not recommend use of athletic face coverings (e.g. gaiters/neck warmers) as a substitute for cloth face coverings. Face masks should have 2 or more layers of breathable fabric, completely cover the nose and mouth, and fit snugly against the sides of the face without gaps. Please take the next week to evaluate your students' face masks and prepare for these changes in requirements.

Also, please remember that as of November 1, **shorts are no longer allowed** for boys and girls. **All girls** must wear plain navy, white, or black non-sheer tights under their uniform jumpers, skirts, and skorts. Full length leggings with matching socks may also be worn under the jumpers, skirts, and skorts.

Health Updates

The definition of a close contact by the CDC has changed. A close contact is anyone (with or without a face covering) who was within 6 feet of a confirmed case of COVID-19 (with or without a face covering), for at least 15 minutes throughout the course of a day. The period of close contact begins 2 calendar days before the onset of symptoms (for a symptomatic person) or 2 calendar days before the positive sample was obtained (for an asymptomatic person). If the case was symptomatic (e.g., coughing, sneezing), persons with briefer periods of exposure may also be considered contacts. Close contacts to a confirmed case of COVID-19 are required to remain in quarantine at home for 14 calendar days starting from the last day of contact with the confirmed case. A negative COVID test for the close contact does NOT change the length of quarantine due to the incubation period of the virus.

The Exclusion Guidance for Schools from IDPH has been updated. Please discontinue the use of our school COVID protocols that were sent out in August and use the attached chart instead. The attached chart has even been updated since the email sent out last week. The most recent chart is dated 10/27/2020. **Please remember that if a member of the household is tested for COVID and is awaiting results, the entire household should quarantine until the results are reported.**

We had another case of COVID reported this week for one of our students, making two active cases currently (total of four for the year). Each of our cases have been in separate homerooms with very few individuals identified as close contacts. There is no evidence of spread as no other individuals have become positive in those homerooms to date. We thank you for your continued vigilance of your students' health and the support of our health protocols!

Last Day for the Catholic Charities Food Drive Challenge

Tomorrow, Friday October 30, is the final day we can collect food and monetary donations for the food drive challenge. Let's overflow those shopping carts!! The winning school will receive treats from Peases and Mel-O-Cream!! Monetary donations are accepted this year (for the purchase of perishable items such as meat and dairy) and will be converted to add to our totals. We also have added an individual challenge. The classroom that brings in the most items during the food drive will win a free spirit day for the entire class. Let's finish strong, Bruins!! Thank you for your support!

What Causes our Entire School to Switch to Remote Learning?

Given the recent COVID statistics for our region of Illinois, this question is becoming more common. When a positive case at school is reported, the school works with the Sangamon County Department of Public Health to investigate and determine the individuals classified as close contacts. Due to the strict health protocols in place at our school, the number of close contacts can be minimal.

An outbreak in a school could cause an entire class to move to remote learning for a period of quarantine, though. According to the IDPH, two confirmed cases of COVID-19 infections occurring within 14 calendar days of each other for individuals in the same classroom would meet the case definition for an outbreak. This would prompt an investigation by the LHD (local health department) that *may* result in recommendations for testing and quarantining all students/staff in the affected classroom.

In addition, our Remote Learning Plan that was distributed to families early in the year states that remote learning due to whole class or school closure may be necessary if at any time a stay-at-home order or Phase 3 is reinstated, our school is unable to meet the guidelines set for Restricted In-Person Learning due to extenuating circumstances, or for an intermittent closure for cleaning. We continue to monitor our Region 3 health status through IDPH.

If Region 3 returns to Phase 3 status under Illinois guidelines, the school would transition to full remote learning. We have our Remote Learning Plan to enact, and communication will be widespread and quick. On the first full school day after announcement of the transition, the faculty will hold a remote learning planning day. Students will not be in attendance (remotely or in-person), and staff will prepare any printed or online materials needed to begin remote learning with the students. Instructions will be relayed to parents at that time.

We treasure each day that we are able to spend in person with our students, and we hope to continue that way as long as possible!

PSA Spirit Wear Orders Now Open Online

Due to popular demand, Miles T-Shirts has re-opened our online spirit wear store for this week only! Orders may be placed through November 1 and will be shipped or sent home with students on November 20 - just in time for holiday gift-giving! They have also added crew neck sweatshirts and athletic wind pants. Please follow the link below to access the store. Thank you for supporting the PSA!

<https://bssspiritwearwinter2020.itemorder.com/>

Safety During Morning Arrival

Several parents park along Laurel Street or in the Laurel Street lot and walk their children over to the building during morning arrival times. If you do so, please be sure to cross the street at the stoplight with the crossing guard, not in the middle of the street. Traffic is heavy in the morning, and we've had some near misses. Let's keep everyone safe!

The 51st Annual Auction was a Success!

Thank you so much for supporting our annual auction! It was a huge success! We even set a record bid for a live auction item of \$11,000 (the trip to The Masters). This is the primary fundraiser for the school and our income (before expenses) is nearly \$135,000!! We are so grateful for the support not only from our own parish and school but many businesses in the Springfield community as well. Special thanks for our fantastic chairperson Megan Peck for her leadership and creativity during these challenging times.

Congratulations to Ms. Williamson!

Congratulations to one of our third grade teachers, Ms. Lin Williamson! She won radio station 101.9 FM's Teacher of the Month recognition for October!

Parent- Teacher Conferences November 5 & 6

SignUp Genius online scheduling for all conferences for teachers in grades Preschool-4th grade will close on Monday, November 2. This also includes specials, resource, and Title I (Mrs. Hendrickson), along with those desiring an individual conference with a teacher in grades 5-8. If you are unable to secure a time slot available for you, please contact the teacher to make an appointment outside of our conference days. Please remember that conferences will be held on November 5 and November 6, and **students will NOT be in attendance on either day!**

All parents will need to enter from the main doors by the school office for their conferences. A symptom check station will be located there, and please remember that all individuals in the school building must wear a face mask at all times. Parents should proceed directly to their appointment and wait outside the classroom until the correct time. Please use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the classrooms. Proper distancing will be set up in the classrooms between the teachers and parents, and we ask that protocols are followed in the hallways as well. We look forward to meeting with you!

Red Ribbon Week Coloring & Poster Contest Winners

Congratulations to the winners of our Red Ribbon Week coloring and poster contest! They did a wonderful job! We appreciate everyone who participated! Coloring contest winners are: PK-K: Leo Rolens, 1st grade: Brendan Tamblin, 2nd grade: Avery Cicci, 3rd grade: Teddy Mizeur, 4th grade: Nolan Davlin, 5th grade: Reid Brady, 6th grade: Audrey Madiar, 7th grade: Emily Gaffney, 8th grade: Caroline Sheehan.

Online School Directory!

Moving forward, BSS will activate the online staff and parent directories in the Rediker Plus Portals system for easy access to needed contact information instead of a printed school directory. Each parent needs to actively give permission for their contact information to be visible to the Blessed Sacrament community, though, so we would like you to start the process now! Please follow the directions on the attached flyer to activate your contact information.

Barnes & Noble Book Fair Is Coming Soon!

Although it will look a little different this year, our annual holiday Barnes & Noble Book Fair will still happen! It will run from Monday, November 23 - Saturday, November 28. Customers may shop in the store or order online for curbside pick-up on Monday, November 23. However, we will not have any special events at the store that evening. You may then order online from Tuesday, November 24-Saturday, November 28 and have purchases shipped to your home. This is a great opportunity to fulfill Christmas gift lists while benefiting our BSS library. Please watch for the Book Fair ID number coming soon!

NEW this fall!! SHG'S VIRTUAL ALUMNI SERIES

Featuring some of our very own alumni giving their expertise on various aspects of the pandemic: the history and science behind it, the social/emotional and psychological components, and ways to deal with the physical/mental stress of it all.

- **November series: Dialogues with the Docs - Wednesday, November 18th at 7pm**

Feeling overloaded and overwhelmed? You're not alone! Zoom in with us as Dr. Bill Moredock and Jenna Reid Yates, Ph.D. discuss the social, emotional and psychological effects the pandemic is having on our students, parents and families and ways you can deal with it.

- **December series: Go with THE FLOW Midwest Yoga - Wednesday, December 2nd -7pm**

Need a break? A way to re-energize and reinvigorate yourself? Here's your chance! Bev Hopkins (owner & instructor) and Ashley Krstulovich (instructor) of The Flow Midwest Yoga will demonstrate ways to combat the physical/mental stresses of dealing with the pandemic especially as we head into the holiday season.

Call the Advancement Office at 217-787-9732 to reserve your spot and for more information. Hope you will ZOOM with us!

Want a night off from cooking and dishes??

Help support St. Pat's on Thursday, November 12th from 4:30-6:30 and pick up a delicious meal from Nelson's Catering at SHG's West Campus. Dinner includes a grilled 1/2 chicken, green beans, mashed potatoes & gravy, and comes with roll & butter. Tickets are \$10 and are available at nelsonscatering.com/st-patricks-school or by sending a check payable to St. Patrick School, 1800 S. Grand Ave. East, Springfield, IL 62703. Orders must be placed by 12:00 PM, November 6th.

Looking Ahead

Friday, October 30 - **Catholic Charities food drive ends**

Free modified spirit day: black/orange or Halloween shirts with jeans or uniform bottoms
Individual classroom celebrations

Saturday, October 31 - Happy Halloween!

Sunday, Nov. 1 -

Daylight Savings Time ends! Fall back one hour!
Online BSS Spirit Wear Store closes!

Tuesday, Nov. 3 - Election Day! School is in session.

Thursday, Nov. 5 -

No school for Parent/Teacher Conferences

Friday, Nov. 6 -

No school for Parent/Teacher Conferences

Sunday, November 8 -

1:00 - Confirmation and First Communion for Ms. Downey's third grade class

Wednesday, Nov. 11 -

Veterans' Day! School is in session (full day!)

Wear red, white and blue shirts with uniform bottoms

Friday, Nov. 13 -

Regular PSA Spirit Day (included in prepaid days)

Wednesday, Nov. 18 -

Mid-quarter progress reports

6:30 p.m. - 2nd Grade Reconciliation in Church

Monday, Nov. 23 - Saturday, Nov. 28

Barnes & Noble Book Fair online

Wednesday - Friday, Nov 25-27 -

No school - Happy Thanksgiving!!