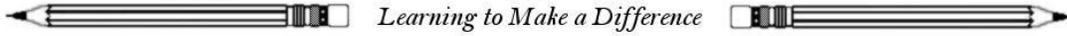


+ Blessed Sacrament



School News



November 12, 2020

Dear Parents,

Last week, I had wonderful extra help with fifth grader Lilly Zurawski as my Principal-for-the-Day. She was a professional in all aspects of her "job", and I'm sure she will be a great leader in her future profession. Kudos to you, Lilly!

As COVID-19 cases have been increasing in our community, you may be following its impact on schools. In the thirteen weeks we have been in session, we have reported five individual cases at BSS at five different times with zero evidence of spread. Some other schools in the diocese have experienced a greater impact which caused a school-wide quarantine period with remote instruction. We intend to keep our doors open for in-person instruction as long as possible, which will require everyone's help. It's vital that everyone follow all necessary safety precautions inside and outside of school and refrain from large gatherings.

You may have seen a similar appeal from other schools: As Thanksgiving approaches and we have a five-day break from school, we would like to appeal to everyone to please follow safety guidelines as the rates in our county and region are increasing at a rapid pace. If your family has travel plans or if you are with individuals outside of your normal contacts, we ask that you please consider a one-week quarantine period. This is a precautionary measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19. During the quarantine period, your student could be in contact with teachers to keep up with coursework as best as possible.

We just need to know who will be following a self-quarantine period after Thanksgiving. Our winter MAP testing for grades 2-8 runs December 1-18, so we will make adjustments to the schedule based on planned absences reported. As I have mentioned before, it is a community effort, and I am grateful for your support and commitment to keeping our doors open.

Due to Thanksgiving, our next newsletter will go out on December 3rd, so I want to share how blessed I am to work with such dedicated teachers and staff members and with such supportive families. Most of all, it's a privilege and a joy each day to have your children at our school. All of you will continue to be included in my prayers of gratitude, especially over the Thanksgiving holiday. On behalf of the entire Blessed Sacrament School faculty and staff, best wishes for a blessed and Happy Thanksgiving to you and your families!

Yours in faith,
Mrs. Dawn Klinner

Barnes & Noble Book Fair Begins November 23!

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. Our bookfair ID number is 12599809.**

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.

Catholic Charities Sponsor-a-Family

Each year Blessed Sacrament School participates in a program sponsored by Catholic Charities to benefit needy families in the Springfield community at Christmas. This year, we are providing gifts and food for a family of twelve. To provide gifts for the children, each student is asked to bring a minimum donation of \$3.00. Gifts will then be purchased from the funds collected. Additionally, the faculty will provide food baskets for Christmas dinner for the family. Please send your donation in an envelope marked "Catholic Charities" to the school office by Friday, November 20. Thank you!

Health Updates

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 was updated by the last newsletter with the most recent chart 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.**

What Causes our Entire School to Switch to Remote Learning?

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, **five** 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 (updated on 11/4/20). 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 in which school restrictions are put in place, 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!

Dinner To Go, Anyone?

We are initiating a Dinners to Go program in December and January that will support local restaurants, make a little money for the school, and hopefully make your life more convenient! When you order hot lunch for December, you will also have the opportunity to purchase a family dinner on Wednesdays from the following restaurants: Engrained Brewery on December 2, Gyros Stop on December 9, and Lake Pointe Grill on December 16. Other restaurants will be participating in January, and possibly February if it works for our families. Ten percent of the proceeds will go to the BSS Annual Fund, which supports the operating budget of the school so order one or all! Pick-up of the refrigerated meals, which will come with instructions for reheating, is between 4:30 and 5:30 each Wednesday. Look for your choices when you open the December hot lunch order form. Hopefully, this will be a win-win-win for the restaurants, BSS, and school families!

December Hot Lunch Orders

The online order form for December hot lunches will be open from Monday, November 16-Monday, November 23. Please remember to send money to Laura Horton in the school office in advance if you would like it loaded on to your child's lunch account. Also, be sure to check out the options for Dinner To Go on the December lunch order form. Everyone needs a night off from cooking!

School Pictures

Picture packages went home this week- be sure to check your child's backpack! Should there be any questions about your child's portrait package please call 1-800-821-7923 or visit www.inter-state.com. If you haven't ordered, it's not too late. We're sending home slips printed with your child's picture and order code, so you can still order online. Picture retakes are scheduled for December 3.

Professional Development for our Faculty on Children's Needs and Educational Challenges

This past week our entire staff had the opportunity to work with Lori Benson-Adams, M.Ed. Mrs. Benson-Adams was previously at our school in 2017, to provide professional development for our faculty on the topics of the brain development in children (including strategies for students with learning differences) and executive functioning skills in children (building attention, self-control and memory). This time, Mrs. Benson-Adams worked with the teachers on grade-level specific expectations and strategies to support children's motivation, self-regulation, and impulse control.

This topic is very timely in light of the extra stressors children face in their lives due to the ongoing pandemic. They are dealing with significant disruptions in their "normal" educational experience, daily routines, and social development and interactions. Additionally, many are taking on the worries their households may be facing at this time. They are not able to see their teachers' (or almost anyone's) facial expression throughout much of the day and certainly have pent-up energy. The teachers found the workshops very helpful and came away with many great strategies. We will have a follow-up session in December as we strive to do everything possible to support your children! There are a few articles attached to today's newsletter that may provide parents with some good tips for home. The goal is to work smarter not harder!

Uniform Reminders

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 or full length leggings with matching socks under their uniform jumpers, skirts, and skorts. **Tights should NOT have any holes in them!** Also remember that **neck gaiters are no longer allowed to be used as face coverings at BSS**. 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.

Social Media Safety and Your Children

Last year, we hosted a presentation by Detective Mike Harth from the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office and representing the Illinois Attorney General's Office. In an era where social media use is prevalent at younger ages and daily life is electronically cataloged, many of us are unaware of just what that means for our children. Detective Harth, who spoke to all fifth through eighth grade students last year, discussed social media and internet use and safety. He covered several practical topics, including how to enable and manage phone parental settings, popular social media apps, chatting apps, and dating apps. He also covered how to enable the privacy settings within these apps, age restrictions on social media apps, how to recognize the dating apps, and what to do if you discover that your child is involved in some of these apps. Attached to this newsletter is the presentation Mike Harth gave last year along with his contact information. Please read through the information for ways to protect your children.

Online School Directory!

BSS has activated 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.

8th Grade Confirmation

The Bishop has given permission for pastors to perform the sacrament of Confirmation for the remainder of this school year, which means that Father Jeff will confirm our students this spring. Due to capacity limits for the church, we are scheduling two ceremonies: one for Mr. Manfredo's homeroom and one for Mrs. Senger's homeroom. The PSR students will be divided among them, too. We will have more information closer to the time regarding any restrictions in place and guidelines to be followed. Right now, we are placing these dates on our school/church calendar: Sunday, March 14 at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Manfredo's class and Sunday, March 21 at 1:00 p.m. Mrs. Senger's class.

If families would prefer their child(ren) be confirmed by the Bishop, then he is doing them at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Parents may contact the diocesan offices to inquire about this.

Catholic Moms Summit

Discover how to find lasting balance, peace, & joy! On November 13-15, 2020, a free, inspirational summit begins with practical wisdom. 84 women presenters will be going deep with honest conversations and practical use-it-today guidance on the issues we face as moms. The invitation to connect with other moms from around the world in a private group will remain open and active after the summit. See <https://www.cardinalstudios.org/moms-summit-home>.

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 Wednesday, December 2nd -7pm**

Need a break? A way to re-energize and reinvigorate yourself? Here's your chance! Bev Hopkins and Ashley Krstulovich 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!

Illinois' Family Reading Night

The Illinois Secretary of State's office promotes the annual Family Reading Night on Thursday, November 19. This is an evening where families are encouraged to stay home and read together. Please see the tip sheet that accompanies today's newsletter and spend some time reading with your children!

Looking Ahead

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
Friday, Nov. 20 -
\$1 Extra spirit day for St. John's Breadline
Donations due for Sponsor-a-family
Monday, Nov. 23 - Saturday, Nov. 28
Barnes & Noble Book Fair online
Wednesday - Friday, Nov 25-27 -
No school - Happy Thanksgiving!!
Tuesday, Dec. 1- Friday, Dec. 18 -
MAP testing period for grades 2-8
Thursday, Dec. 3 -
Picture retake day
Friday, Dec. 4 -
PSA Spirit Day (included in prepaid days)
Wednesday, Dec. 9 -
1:30 p.m. dismissal - faculty meeting
Friday, Dec. 18 -
End of 2nd quarter!
11:30 a.m. dismissal - NO BASE!