

† Blessed Sacrament



School News



Learning to Make a Difference

January 21, 2021

Dear Parents,

It was wonderful news to hear that our region recently moved into Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan, and we will continue to implement all of our health protocols at school in order to keep moving in this positive direction.

Along with many other changes this year, Catholic Schools Week will look different. A detailed description for Catholic Schools Week is included and reminders for each day are listed in *Looking Ahead* in this newsletter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the school office.

Please note that dismissal on Friday, Feb. 5, is at 11:30 a.m., and no B.A.S.E. is available.

Typically, all the Springfield Catholic schools would join together for a celebration of Catholic education as a part of the National School Choice Week, which is next week.

While we won't celebrate together this year, we are still reminded of the gift of Catholic education that you have chosen to give your children. Thank you for the many ways that you support our school in our partnership to provide the best possible education in both academics and faith development. Have a good weekend!

Yours in faith,
Mrs. Dawn Kliner

Registration for 2021-2022

In order to assist with the planning process for next year, registration for current school families will begin early this year. The registration period for preschool through eighth grade for the 2021-2022 school year begins on February 16, with registration packets being sent home with current students. Preschool and PreK offerings will remain the same, which will be explained in the packets. Registration forms are due back on Friday, February 26.

Registration for the general public begins on Monday, March 1. We have many former BSS families interested in returning this fall, along with new families, which makes timely registration of our current families very important. While we have maintained restricted capacity limits in classrooms this year, we intend to raise individual classroom capacity limits for next year. Depending upon community restrictions in place, we are unsure if we will go back to pre-pandemic capacities or somewhat lower limits, so registration of our current school families will ensure their enrollment. We will continue to strictly implement all health requirements, which has made for a very successful school year. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Messages for Student Dismissal Changes

Understandably, dismissal plans for a student may occasionally need to change during the course of a school day. In that event, please call the school office so that a message may be relayed to your child and the teacher. Please do not message the teacher directly via Class Dojo, Rediker, or email as those messages may be missed. Oftentimes, teachers do not have an opportunity to check those forms of communication until after the school day has ended. Thank you for your cooperation!

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

In order to keep our procedures moving smoothly during arrival, all cars exiting the parking lot onto Walnut Street are requested to turn right for smoother traffic flow.

It has also been brought to our attention that since we have returned from Christmas break, masks are not being worn consistently by adults at dismissal. Out of respect for all the students, staff, and parents around at dismissal, we ask that all individuals keep masks on until they are inside their vehicles. Thank you for your cooperation!

Catholic Schools Week - Let the Games Begin!

Our annual Catholic Schools Week celebration is just around the corner! Our PSA parent coordinators, ReJeana Meado and Marin Lowder, have several exciting activities lined up for that week. Unfortunately, we are not able to have our annual parent-student lunch this year, so perhaps your own children will treat you to a special dinner. Please note the dress up themes for each day on the calendar of events. While these are non-uniform days, all clothing items must reflect the theme of the specific day, be appropriate for school, and follow the guidelines printed in the parent/student handbook on page 27. If there is any doubt about an item of clothing, please do not allow your children to wear it or send an alternative option for them to change into if necessary. Please refer to the calendar section in this newsletter for more information on each day's theme and see the complete calendar of events that accompanies today's newsletter.

Year-End Tax Documents

All school families will receive their year-end tax documents from Mrs. Horton soon. Electronic copies and paper copies will be sent home. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Horton at horton@bssbruins.org or at extension 245.

Eagle Scout Project

Carter Etheridge, a BSS graduate and parishioner, is collecting plastic bottle caps to be melted and molded into benches for the pediatric floor of St. John's Hospital as his Eagle Scout project. He is well on his way to collecting his goal of 1600 lbs by summer of 2021! However, funds are also needed for the process of making the benches.

Blessed Sacrament will hold an extra spirit day on Friday, January 29 to raise funds in support of this project for the pediatric floor of St. John's Hospital. This day will not be included in the prepaid option, so all participants should bring at least \$1 for the cause. Thank you for your support!

New Area Code Coming!

Please remember that all customers with an Illinois 217 area code must begin dialing the area code and phone number for all local calls starting February 27, 2021. Another area code will be introduced into our area, so 10-digit numbers will be required for dialing. This is a perfect time to practice the full phone numbers of parents with your students!

Invest in Kids Scholarship Program

Passed in 2017 by the Illinois General Assembly, this program provides scholarships to private schools for families with financial need. Families can begin applying for next school year on January 13. By statute, scholarship money is allocated on a first come-first served basis for qualified applicants so be sure to apply on January 13. Empower Illinois is the organization that administers donations and scholarships for B.S.S. students. Please visit their website at empowerillinois.org to find out more about the application process. You may also refer to the newsletter that was distributed in December or contact Kim Hoffmann or Laura Horton in the school office with questions.

IMSA Fusion Spring Program

The spring semester of the IMSA Fusion program for 5th and 6th grade students began this Tuesday and Wednesday. If your child is enrolled in the program, please send your semester fee payment to the school office by January 26. Please contact Mrs. Burke with any questions.

Winter is Here!

As snow, cold temperatures, and gusts of winter wind have arrived, mixed in with milder, sunny days, please remember that students need to be dressed appropriately for lunchtime recess. Typically, students go outdoors for recess unless there is precipitation or the temperature (actual or wind chill) is 20F or below. It is necessary for students to wear winter-weight coats on cold days along with gloves, hats, etc. as it does get quite cold for 20 minutes on the playground. A sweatshirt or light jacket may be sufficient to go from the car into a building, but it is often not enough for recess. For their own safety, students may not be allowed to go outdoors for recess if they are not properly dressed. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter!

Speaking of Winter, Snow Days Are Still a Possibility

We now often utilize remote attendance and learning for students who are absent due to illness or quarantine. However, should the school need to close due to weather conditions, we may not be able to utilize remote attendance and learning in place of taking a "snow day" on short notice. While we are looking at all options, it may not be feasible for some grade levels, particularly our primary grades, to have a remote learning day on short notice. Thus, it may be an official "snow day." The decision will be made in conjunction with many of the Springfield Catholic schools and will be a consistent decision for all grade levels in attendance at BSS. As always, parents will be notified through our Rediker text messaging and email system of any school cancelations. You may also tune in to WICS Channel 20 and 1240 AM WTAX radio station to learn of any weather-related school closings.

It's Not Too Soon to Play Cupid

Buy Scrip gift cards NOW and be ready for Valentine's Day! Gift ideas? We've got gift cards for Old Navy (cute Valentine t-shirts), Barnes & Noble, Bath & Body Works, iTunes, Home Goods, Kohls, Dick's Sporting Goods, Scheels and Target. Use our Scrip cards as a Valentine's gift, or take the gift cards shopping with you and use them to pick something out at any of the above vendors. See how easy it is to impress your valentine with Scrip!

Young Authors

Each year our students participate in a writing activity called Young Authors. The Illinois Young Authors program has a long history. It is a celebration of the written work of children in kindergarten through eighth grades. The purpose of the statewide program, sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Language and Literacy Council, is to support classroom teachers in their efforts to encourage and improve students' abilities in writing, reading, listening and sharing, and to recognize the accomplishments of young authors.

Participation is optional for kindergarten through second grade but is a class assignment in grades 3-8. Any students in grades 3-8 will receive one complimentary "bare book" for use in creating the finished manuscripts if required by their teachers. Additional books are for sale in the school office for \$3.50 each. The pages of the books are not printed with lines, but students may write/type their stories on loose paper and then paste them into the book.

Any students in kindergarten through second grade who choose to write books should return them to the school office by March 5. Teachers in grades 3-8 may set an earlier deadline if they so choose.

Looking Ahead

Monday, Jan. 25 - Wear leadership t-shirt

Friday, Jan. 29 -

Extra \$1 spirit day for St. John's pediatric floor project (see related article)

Virtual March for Life for the 8th grade

Sunday, Jan. 31 - Friday, Feb. 5 -

Happy Catholic Schools Week!

Let the Games Begin!

Monday, Feb. 1 - Community Appreciation Day

Monopoly Monday - Find the Boardwalk to Your Park Place! Dress as twins day.

- Appreciation video delivered to St. John's Hospital for healthcare workers

Tuesday, Feb. 2 - Faith Appreciation Day

Twister Tuesday - Twist Your Way into the 1960's

- Students are making cards to be delivered to St. Joseph's Home and the Dominican Sisters Motherhouse

Wednesday, Feb. 3 - Parent Appreciation Day

Wacky, Tacky Wednesday in Candyland - dress like you are full of sugar.

- PSA is providing an ice cream sundae bar for all students
- No homework! Parents need a break!

Thursday, Feb. 4 - Student Appreciation Day

Battleship - Battle it out in your favorite Bruins or sports team wear

- Special lunch provided by the PSA at no charge - hot dogs, chips, dessert
- No homework! Students need a break!
- Games, popcorn and movies throughout the day in each classroom

Friday, Feb. 5 - Teacher Appreciation Day

The Game of Life (after BSS) - dress as your future career

- Krispy Kreme donuts & hot chocolate provided for students' breakfast
- No homework! Teachers need a break, too!
- 11:30 a.m. dismissal - BASE is NOT available!

Monday, Feb. 8 - Wear leadership t-shirts

Wednesday, Feb. 10 -

1:30 p.m. dismissal for a faculty meeting

Friday, Feb. 12 -

Free modified spirit day for Valentine's Day!

Classroom Valentine's Day celebrations

Monday, Feb. 15 - No school for Presidents' Day!

Tuesday, Feb. 16 -

Registration begins for current families

Wednesday, Feb. 17 - Ash Wednesday

Friday, Feb. 19 - Monthly PSA spirit day

Monday, Feb. 22 -

Virtual Open House for prospective families

Friday, Feb. 26 -

Registration from current families due

Men's Club fish fry - drive-thru/carry out only!