



September 13, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope this letter finds you well and safe. Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year.

It was so wonderful to see the PreK–second grade students at school last week and to see third–eighth grade Distance Learning in their school uniforms. The teachers have worked diligently throughout the summer months preparing for our return to school in person or virtual. I am very blessed to work with such a great team, so please thank your teachers! They are amazing and care about your children and this community.

This summer, Ms. Gelao, Mrs. Carsner, Ms. DeJesus, Mrs. Smith, and I continued our ST(R)EAM certification with the Portland Public School team and other public schools in Oregon. We focused on:

- Designing a welcoming space where students will come to invent
- Building ST(R)EAM projects around real problems that need to be solved
- Implementing subject content across grade levels

I thank these teachers for their time and for continuing to help this school grow to its fullest potential.

I would also like to recognize Mrs. Cordell and Ms. Hilburger for their countless hours working with the state to get our childcare license for Kindergarten. On September 17th, we are to have a virtual state inspection in grades first through fourth. If we pass the licensing inspection, this will allow SFCS to have additional grades on campus for a designated time throughout the day. The process is complicated, so I thank you for your patience. I will keep you informed as we continue our goal. In the meantime, the teachers are doing an awesome job with distance learning and are working collaboratively together. A huge shout out to Mrs. Carsner! She has been so helpful and patient with all of us as we learn new platforms, so thank you Mrs. Carsner.

This coming school year, Mrs. Butzer will continue to communicate through weekly Wolf Posts. The Wolf Posts include events, reminders, and due dates. If you need to request Mrs. Butzer to post any information, it will need to be approved by me prior to posting and must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. each Monday. The teachers in grades PreK-5 will communicate weekly in newsletter format; whereas, middle school teachers and I will post a monthly newsletter.

Mrs. Butzer has a couple of reminders for you. If you have not completed your Emergency information in *School Speak* or have not handed in needed documents, please do so immediately, so school records will be up-to-date.

Back to School Night (BTSN) this year will be virtual. There are two nights set aside for BTSN:

- September 23rd **PreK – Fourth Grade** from 6:30-8:00
- September 24th **Fifth – Eighth Grade** from 6:30-8:00

This week an invite link and agenda will be sent to you from the school office. All parents will be virtually present for the Pastor, Principal, SAC, PSO, and Auction Reports. After the reports, each parent will meet with their child's teacher. There will be two teacher sessions each night. During these sessions the teacher will review expectations and content to be learned and address any questions you may have. **Your child's teacher will send you the directions and code needed to join virtually.**

Regarding St. Francis Catholic School's (SFCS) *In-Depth Study* and *Self-Study*, it has been completed and sent to the visiting committee. The teachers and I used data and analysis to determine SFCS goals to guide us over the next six years to further enhance student learning. The goals are focused on student faith formation as well as student academic growth, and include specific strategies for implementation. One of the goals will come directly from the *In-Depth Study* of our school science program. The list of critical goals are as follows:

Develop the SLEs goals to reflect and align with the revised mission and philosophy statements and explore and implement ways to actualize and assess the integration of the SLEs

- With the updating of the Mission and Philosophy Statement, it became apparent that a revision of the SLE goals was imperative. Additionally, after reviewing the survey results indicated that the parents need further education regarding an understanding of these goals and how these goals are assessed. While students are knowledgeable about the written SLE statements, there is not a clear understanding by all of how they are attainable and incorporated into daily life. In addition, the faculty have developed assessment measures but are not consistently assessed or recorded throughout grade levels. These discussions need to be on-going to ensure the continuing evaluation of effective assessment tools and practices. A more formal evaluation instrument needs to be developed, validated, and adopted. Maintaining the effectiveness and relevance of integrated SLEs will positively affect student academic, person, and faith development. Furthermore, there were multiple discussions by faculty and parents regarding service projects at all grade levels. The service projects need to integrate the four pillars of the SLE goals. Therefore, it was proposed and agreed upon by the administration and the faculty community service projects need to be added to each classroom's requirements.

Develop and implement the science curriculum into the ST(R)EAM program to qualify for the two-year certification to meet the 21st Century Standards

- This goal is necessary in order to stay current with 21st Century Standards. Teachers will continue working with the Portland Public Schools (PPS) in forming a full leadership team to begin developing a complete ST(R)EAM Transformation Plan. This program will guide St. Francis Catholic School through an in-depth science experience and professionally develop teachers to integrate subjects over two academic school years. This partnership with PPS will earn St. Francis Catholic School a certification as a ST(R)EAM School where ELA, mathematics, project-based learning, and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) are integrated to reflect real-world, place-based phenomena. The need to increase science integration in all classes will positively affect all students' achievement levels.

Explore ways to continue to improve reading comprehension through professional development, tracking of students, and the integration of a variety of strategies in the Kindergarten through eighth grade ELA curriculum to promote the proficiency and the high achievement of all learners.

- St. Francis Catholic School enrolls a broad scope of learners. In order to educate each child to actualize potential, on-going faculty training and collaboration is necessary in reading. Increasing teacher knowledge of, and proficiency in, a variety of reading techniques and strategies will enhance student success. In the 2019-2020 school year, the administration and faculty developed a formal tracking system in *Renaissance STAR* reading and mathematics to promote the proficiency and the high achievement of all learners. Through professional development opportunities with reading specialists, public school in-service, and Professional Learning Community (PLC) with the school's region, St. Francis Catholic school will learn strategies and knowledge to increase student reading skills and comprehension.

I am looking forward to our school year together. We are blessed to be well and safe. If you know of a family that needs our help, please reach out, we are here to serve.

Sincerely and God bless,
Ms. Gonzalez
Principal