



# THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE MONTHLY

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE.

CONNECTING TEACHERS, PARENTS, COMMUNITY AND PARISH.

[WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG](http://WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG)

JANUARY 10, 2020

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

The start of a new year inspires us to make resolutions to ensure that we are in a better place when it is time again to turn the calendar to a new year. We may make resolutions to do things that make us healthier, smarter, closer to God, our spouse, our children. In short, it is time to take stock and plan to be in a better place. At school, we also use this drive and inspiration to look at where we want the students and the school community to be in January of 2021. The teachers and I are focusing on school wide student achievement. Achievement is measured in a few ways. First, we measure it using standardized assessments like the Scantron scores. This gives us very valuable information about student growth in reading and math. The students' understanding of the teaching of the faith are measured by the Faith Knowledge Assessment. Classroom assessments and report grades give us an indication of achievement as well. There are less quantitative measures that can indicate the students' achievement. The quality of their work on projects, how much they read outside of school, their faithfulness in doing homework and studying, as well as their desire to be in school. How much students participate and question and wonder about how things work also affects achievement. Finally, a student's belief in his or her ability to achieve and confidence that they can tackle challenging tasks and take risks are critical factors. As I look at where I want the students of St. Matthias to be I see tremendous potential and feel not only hopeful, but confident that they can grow in leaps and bounds.

However, hope is not a plan. There are some things that we must do to ensure that our children achieve to the extent that they are capable. And I believe that every child is capable! I have asked the teachers to review daily schedules and practices to maximize learning time. They are carefully reviewing Scantron data to ensure that children at every level receive instruction that promotes growth. They are exploring ways to use technology more to engage the students. They are teaching more in groups and conferring with individual students more frequently.

There are many ways that parents can contribute to student achievement. Here are a few suggestions that will reap great rewards. In some cases, these suggestions do not apply to you. But if they do, please do your best to incorporate them into your family routine.

- Get your child to school a few minutes before the 8:05 bell. Tardy students miss out and disrupt the learning of others.
- Provide a healthy breakfast, snack and lunch every day.
- Ensure that your child has adequate rest. Take phones and electronic devices away at bedtime.
- Provide a quiet place for homework and studying.
- Make sure your child reads a variety of material at least 15 minutes a day. Go to the library.
- Check your child's planner daily.
- Visit the parent portal weekly.
- Ask about school every day.
- Get involved in activities at school.
- If learning difficulties are suspected, visit the pediatrician, discuss this with the teacher and pursue testing.
- Tell your child you have high expectations and encourage him or her to aim high and set goals.
- Sign up for See Saw.

Together we can end this school year with amazing growth and high achievement for your child!





### THANK YOU TO OUR HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The children, teachers and staff of St. Matthias are very grateful to the dedication and hard work of our HSA volunteers. We enjoyed a great pancake breakfast and Christmas activities. The children were thrilled to visit with Santa and begin their Christmas holiday with a fun and exciting school day. We are grateful to all who volunteered and to Mrs. Dawn Freeman for leading the event and to her helpers.

### ENROLLMENT FOR THE 2020-2021 OPENS

All St. Matthias families should have received an e-mail from TADS informing them that enrollment for the coming school year is open. All families are encouraged to enroll as soon as possible. **Families who enroll on or before March 1 receive a \$150 discount on the enrollment fee.** If you did not receive this e-mail, please check the e-mail address that you have in TADS and inform them and the school if it has changed. Also, it is important that you include the cell phone number on which you wish to receive texts as your primary, home number on the TADS enrollment page. Tuition and fees for the coming year will be shared at the State of the School meeting on January 29 and in the February *Monthly*. Please be assured that the increases will be as minimal as possible.

### MID-YEAR SCANTRON TESTING BEGINS

Next week we will begin the midyear testing program. The children in grades 2-8 will take reading tests in January and math tests in February. These tests measure individual growth. Every student has a growth target based on the baseline testing. The teachers carefully review this data and use it to design lessons that are differentiated and challenging. These tests also enable us to see where students stand in relation to a nationwide pool of students their own age. Thus, in addition to measuring growth (reflected in the scaled score SS), they also measure achievement (measured in the national percentile score NPR). The testing schedule is on the attached calendar and listed below. Parents, please see that your child has a good night's sleep and healthy breakfast on the day of his or her reading and math tests.

#### Scantron Schedule

**Monday, Jan. 13** – 7th Reading

**Tuesday, Jan. 14** – 4th Grade Reading

6th Grade Reading

**Wednesday, Jan. 15** – 8th Reading

**Thursday, Jan. 16** – 5th Grade Reading

**Tuesday, Jan. 21** – 3rd Grade Reading

**Wednesday, Jan. 22** – 2nd Grade Reading

**Thursday, Jan. 23** – Kindergarten Reading Foundations  
1st Grade Reading Foundations

### RAFFLE TICKETS DUE

All raffle ticket stubs and the corresponding \$400 are due on February 1. Drawings have begun and will occur on the 1st and 15th of the month after school prayer. Families who return their 20 tickets and proceeds by January 15 will receive one service hour. One of the student prayer leaders pulls the winning ticket for the \$1000 prize. The ticket is then returned to the bin for another chance to win. The winner is announced, published in *Bridges* and the parish bulletin and posted on the school website. The family that sold the ticket receives \$50.

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Catholic Schools Week (CSW) is a nation-wide, week-long celebration of the mission of Catholic and contribution of Catholic education. It begins on Sunday, January 26 with our students attending Mass in their school uniform. This year our school will be providing coffee and donuts for parishioners and school families after the 9:30 AM Mass. All are invited. The week also includes Open House for current and prospective parents, Student and Teacher Appreciation Day, school Mass and many other activities. Look for a detailed listing in next week's *Bridges*. Mark your calendar to attend our annual State of the School meeting on Wednesday, January 29 at 6:30. Planning for this important meeting is underway. Look for further information to be sent home soon.



**ATTENTION FAMILIES WHO HAVE APPLIED FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR THE 2021 SCHOOL YEAR**

The Catholic Schools Office will soon begin reviewing applications to make financial awards to qualifying families. Please note that applications that are rated “poor” will not be considered. A “poor” rated application represents an incomplete application that is not eligible for consideration until it is completed. Often, the incomplete application is missing a required supporting document, such as a W-2 and/or 1040 tax related form. The deadline date for all “poor” rated returning family applicants to provide missing documentation to TADS to be considered for Archdiocesan tuition assistance for the 2020 – 2021 school year is **Friday, January 17, 2020**. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Blackburn in the school office.

**EXCESSIVE LATENESS**

Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and very inconsiderate of others. It is not fair to the students who are on time to be distracted or interrupted by classmates who are unpacking and walking around while they are working. Children who are late for school on a regular basis misses out on learning, they start the day behind and interrupt the teacher’s instruction. Tardiness is noted by the high school admissions counselors and in some cases may jeopardize admittance to a Catholic high school of your choice. If there is a good reason why your child cannot be on time for school, you are expected to discuss this with the principal immediately.

**PILLAR OF THE MONTH: FAIRNESS**

This month, as we celebrate the birth and great contributions of Dr. Martin Luther, King, Jr., our focus is on the pillar of fairness. Dr. King exhorted our nation to treat everyone with dignity and fairness and gave his life for this noble cause. Throughout the month the children will learn and practice the elements of fairness: play by the rules, take turns and share, be open-minded and listen to the others, do not take advantage of others nor blame others carelessly.

**OPEN HOUSE**

Spread the word! St. Matthias will be having Open House on Tuesday, January 28. Invite friends and neighbors to visit and consider what a catholic education at St. Matthias may bring to their children. Families who refer new students receive a \$500 tuition credit when they complete their first year.

**FAMILY COMMUNICATION**

In order for you to receive text messages from the school we need to collect cell phone numbers. Some of the numbers pulled from TADS are home numbers. Please fill out the form below and return to the school at your earliest convenience.

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Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number to receive texts \_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name(s) and Grade(s)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____