



THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

BRIDGES



WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG ❖ APRIL 23, 2020

SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to the 67 families that have responded to last week's survey. The survey closes tomorrow, so if you have not had the chance to give your input, it is not too late. The data collected will be shared in next week's *Bridges*. At this point, the majority of parents feel that the workload for their children is "just right." Many families would like to attend a Zoom parent meeting, so that will be scheduled soon. Predictably, the preferred times were very varied. There will be more than one time offered. Those families who have requested a Chromebook will be contacted by Mrs. Kelly for pick-up next week.



PHASE 3 LEARNING

phase 3 Phase 3 of our distance learning begins on Monday, April 27. Details regarding this new phase will be discussed more fully next week, as teachers are working on the standards they will address for the remainder of the year. Phase 3 learning will also be one of the items discussed at the next parent and principal Zoom Meeting. Some things to note are:

- The focus of the remaining days of this school year is on learning, not grading.

Teachers want to make the most effective use of remaining instructional time. To do this they are selecting critical standards and designing learning opportunities and assessments for these critical standards.

- Standardized tests will not be given this spring. This includes Scantron for grades K-8, the Faith Knowledge Assessment (FKA) for grades 1-8 and the science test for grades 4 and 8.
- 4th Quarter grades on report cards will be P (pass) for students who met expectations, or I for incomplete. Students will still receive a letter grade based on all 4 quarters as a final grade. I is not considered a failure and students with a incomplete will be promoted. In a few cases, students with multiple failing grades and poor participation in the 4th quarter, may not be promoted. Please note that parents of these students will be contacted in the next few days. Teachers will continue to put grades in Rediker, which parents have access to in their parent portal. Teachers can use points or put an M for an assessment where expectations were met, and R for revise which will be changed when the assignment is submitted that meets expectations or an I or blank for work not turned in.

IXL LEARNING PLATFORM

All students have an IXL account and over 90% of the students have been working in IXL. Parents are encouraged to visit this site <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CWj9G-NuOg> to learn more about this very valuable tool.

IXL provides skill practice for students in K-8 in language arts, math, science and social studies. Students who complete the initial diagnostic arena questions in math and reading are provided with an individual learning plan that is designed for their specific needs. Teachers can also assign skill practice to all their students after teaching a lesson on Zoom or Seesaw or related to an assignment. One of the advantages of using IXL is that it does indicate growth in reading and math. With Scantron data not available, the information we have on each student in IXL will be very helpful. The program address 8000 skills from grades K-12. It is also important to note that a score of 80 demonstrates strong understanding or proficiency. Once the student reaches that score, they enter the challenge zone. The questions related to the skill become more difficult. Students should take frequent breaks at this level. IXL is also a very useful tool for our sixth and seventh graders to prepare for the High School Placement Test. We are currently devising some incentives to motivate and honor our hard-working learners.



KEEP IN TOUCH

We are hoping and praying that all our St. Matthias family members are healthy. However, if someone in your family has or gets the Covid 19 virus, please contact our counselor, Mrs. Rampey so that we can remember him or her in prayer and reach out to see how we can help.



JOIN US FOR PRAYER



Mrs Schratz leads school prayer Monday through Friday at 8:05 A.M. It is the same format as was used when we were in school. Next week birthdays will be announced, with the ones we missed being added a little each day. It is a great opportunity to see the students and teachers to start our school day. Parents are welcome too. The link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88338204440?> and the password is 612287. Mrs. O'Hare leads the end of the day prayer at 4 p.m. on Facebook. Please join her there.

MISSING THEM

At the end of March, the very difficult decision was made to furlough six of our employees and to cut hours for two others. Special teachers, Mrs. Wright, and Mrs. Hess, were temporarily relieved of their duties as were resource teacher, Ms. Dunn and PK and K instructional assistants, Sra. Vasquez and Mrs. Kellerman. Mrs. O'Hare and Mrs. Rampey are working on reduced hours. Thanks to the great efforts of our Pastor, Fr. Jack and bookkeeper, Mrs. O'Leary we are currently pending receipt of funding from the Payroll Protection Plan. We hope to have our staff back soon.



THANK YOU, MR. HECTOR

With the building empty, our building manager, Mr. Hector Perez, is busy working on improvements. The art room has been painted and he is currently working on improvements in the middle school restrooms. He will be doing likewise in the primary restrooms next. All we need is the children to return to see his handiwork!

IMPORTANT RE-ENROLLMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

On April 30, the school's enrollment data will be collected by the Archdiocese of Washington. Healthy enrollment is very important not only for marketing, but for resource allocation, including staffing, purchasing of new technology, curricular resources and other preparations for the coming school year. We currently have 71 children pending. Next week, Mrs. O'Hare and Mrs. Schratz will be contacting the parents of pending students to discuss their plans for the 2021 school year. If you know you are returning, and just have not yet gotten around to it, please enroll today. Families who received financial aid through the Pastors Award program last year and need it for 2021 must re-enroll by tomorrow, April 24.



REFER A FRIEND!



There are openings in all classes for the coming school year. We are especially interested in recruiting preschool, kindergarten and grade 6 students. Families who refer a family that completes this year will receive a \$500 tuition credit for the 2022 school year. If you have friends or neighbors that are dissatisfied with the public-school system, but cannot afford tuition, they may apply for BOOST until June 1.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND GRADUATION

These two very significant events will certainly occur! Once it looks like we are re-opening churches, information will be communicated to families.



HONORING OUR MOST WONDERFUL ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL

This week the nation honors administrative professionals. St. Matthias is particularly blest to have Mrs. Blackburn manning the front office, handling parent requests, supporting teachers, and comforting children who need ice, a chance to walk around, a snack or just some TLC. She never complains, even when students or parents ask for the pizza form for the tenth time. Nothing rattles her and she always has a smile and infinite patience. God bless, Mrs. Blackburn, our own St. Marsha!