



THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

BRIDGES



WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG ❖ SEPTEMBER 3, 2029

WELCOME NEW FAMILIES

The St. Matthias School community is enriched by the addition of the following new families and their children:

Mizpah Ashu and daughter, Rayminelle (2)

Valery Azeh and Michele Tekam and daughter, Melanie (K)

Anthonia Ekong and children, Anthony (3) and Harmony Brewer (PK)

Basil and Patricia Eze and daughter, Chinna (PK)

Collis and Tanjaneka Jones and daughter, Taaji (3)

Tameka Patterson and son, Gharrett Manning (PK)

Lilian and Divine Njodzeka and daughter, Asheri (2)

Collette and Emmanuel Oben and their children, Stephen (4), Stephanie (4) and Zane (K)

Opeyemi Oye and Modupe Saliu and their daughter, Alexis (3)

Vincent Parker and Jamie Wilkins and daughter, Jordin (3)

Leslie Riley and son, Asthon (5)

Assumpta Omenichekwe and Patrik Chike and son Charles Ukah (2)

We hope you will quickly feel at home!

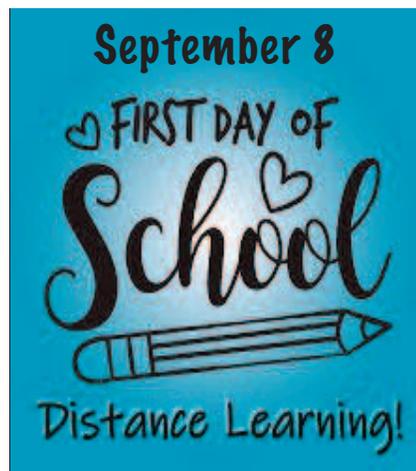


FROM THE SCHOOL OFFICE



Due to COVID restrictions, dropping by the school office is not permitted. If you need to see anyone in school administration, we request that you make an appointment by calling or emailing Mrs. Blackburn at mblackburn@stmatthias.org a day in advance. Thank you for your cooperation with this new and temporary policy. Office hours are 8:00 - 3:30 pm.

In the time of COVID and distance learning, communication is more important than ever. Please be sure that your TADS account lists the email you check regularly as your primary email address. Please call the school office to change or update your email address. Likewise, in an emergency we would like to contact all families by text. This is only possible if your family's home number in TADS is a cell phone.



Mark Your Calendar

Friday, September 4
School and Office Closed

Monday, September 7
Labor Day School Closed

Tuesday, September 8
First Day of School

Friday, September 11
School Mass (Virtual) 9:45 am

Grade 3 on Campus
10:45 - 11:45 am

NOON DISMISSAL

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Greetings! I am Mrs. Rampey and I am so excited to begin the 2020-2021 virtual school year serving the students, staff, and families of the Academy of St. Matthias as your School Counselor. I address the developmental needs of all students through a comprehensive school counseling program. This includes supporting students in reaching their full potential academically, developing college and career readiness skills and promoting healthy personal/social development. I meet with students individually, in small groups and during periodic classroom lessons. Students can request to meet with me, or referrals can be made by a teacher, parent, or administrator. My email address is brampey@stmatthias.org.



I am also available to conference with parents, teachers, and staff. I am here three days per week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Please feel free to make an appointment or contact me for any questions and/or concerns. I am looking forward to a great and productive school year!

VOLUNTEER HOURS The volunteer service hour policy is being modified at this time, due to the need for distance learning and the cancellation of many events that normally occur in the school year. However, there are still many ways that families can be involved and support our school. **Each family will be required to do 12 hours of service this year.** This policy may be re-evaluated when circumstances change. Calls for help usually go out from



Mrs. Blackburn and include a Signup Genius form to indicate your willingness to serve. Currently, we need volunteers to organize used uniforms for our first used uniform sale outdoors next week. Parents are also needed to spread wood chips and make improvements in the Tot Lot. Some teachers will be seeking parents to assist with the on-site grade level events in September and October. There are also a few school improvement projects that need volunteers either on a weekday or weekend. Finally, parent leaders are needed to serve as committee heads on the Home School Association Executive Committee. **We are especially in need of parents with marketing and/or finance expertise to serve on the School Advisory Board. If you can help in any of these capacities, please contact Mrs. Blackburn or Mrs. Schratz.** To volunteer click on the link <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0549a5a723a2f58-volunteers1>

NEW FAMILIES: VIRTUS TRAINING

The Office of Child Protection is offering interactive Virtus training sessions. You can sign up for a class through the Virtus account that you create on www.virtus.org. Additionally, you will need an electronic background check. You can email fingerprinting@adw.org to schedule an appointment. If you need assistance with the electronic background checks or the Virtus training classes you may call 301-853-5328.



SCANTRON TESTING



All students in grades 2-8 must complete the Scantron tests in reading and math by October 16. Although not required by the Archdiocese of Washington, St. Matthias is also testing children in grades K and 1. The kindergarteners will take the test in school and students in grades 1-8 who have not already been tested may make an appointment to come into school on Friday, September 11, 18, 25 and October 2 and 9 at 12:30-1:30 pm.

GRADE 8 PARENT MEETING

All 8th grade parents are invited to attend a virtual parent meeting to learn about the admissions process for Catholic high schools. There are many components in this process, so it is essential that everyone is informed. Please mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 16 at 7 P.M. The meeting invitation will be sent to parents by email.



GOOD NEWS



I am happy to announce that two of our teachers, Ms. Aurore Anastasiadis and Ms. Shaughn Smith received grants that will enhance our students' school experience. Ms. Anastasiadis received the Teacher Innovation Grant from the Archdiocese of Washington for a weather station. Ms. Smith received the Notre Dame Grant for a collection of books for the fourth-grade classroom library. We are grateful for their initiative. Well done!

CARES ACT FUNDING AND CHROMEBOOKS

St. Matthias has requested an additional 100 Chromebooks using our allotment of federal funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and economic Security (CARES) Act. We were just informed today that it could take many months to receive these devices. We will do our best to distribute the 25 Chromebooks that we have on a need basis. We are also seeking donations to purchase some more quickly. Your understanding is greatly appreciated. **Children who will be coming to school for their distance learning need to bring their own device, including headphones and a microphone.**

PILLAR OF THE MONTH: CITIZENSHIP

The Academy of St. Matthias strives to implement the Responsive Classroom approach to teaching. It is based on the belief that in order to be successful in and out of school, students need to learn a set of social and emotional competencies—cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control—and a set of academic competencies—academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors. We also incorporate specific teaching that helps children become people of good character. This approach, known as Character Counts, identifies six pillars of good character that embody the Gospel values. These pillars are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship, remembered by the acronym TRRFCC (pronounced terrific). Teachers focus on one pillar each month. The pillar for September is Citizenship. In this time of pandemic and civil unrest calling for racial justice and equity, it is fitting that we teach the importance of being a good neighbor, caring and pursuing the common good, volunteering to improve our community, observing just laws and respecting the principles of democracy.

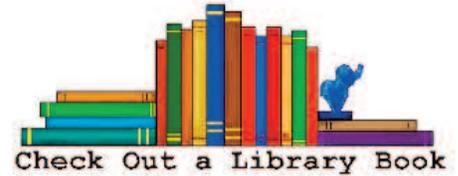


ON-SITE LEARNING EVENT

Per The Academy of St. Matthias Re-Opening Plan, each class in grades 1-8 will have an opportunity to come on campus, outdoors to interact with classmates and the teacher. The events will include academic and social components. We cannot mandate attendance but want to assure parents the children will be socially distant. We hope all class members can attend. There will be one event in September and two monthly beginning in October. The dates for these events will be published in *Bridges*. In case of rain the event will be postponed.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Our school year is off to an unusual start due to the pandemic. That said, we will attempt to do curbside (front door actually) pickup for your child to have library books. Please watch email, SEESAW or the Middle School website for information on the menu, due dates for the menu, and pick up/drop off dates. All information will be coming soon!



IF YOUR CHILD CURRENTLY HAS LIBRARY MATERIALS FROM SCHOOL, PLEASE RETURN THEM TO THE BIN THAT WILL BE PLACED BY THE FRONT DOOR OF THE SCHOOL NEXT TUES – FRI FROM 7:30 a.m – 12:30 p.m. The bin will say BOOK RETURN ALL GRADES. IF you do not remember if your child has books, please email Mrs. O’Hare for that information.

INSTRUMENTAL BAND



The Archdiocese Music Program will offer online Band lessons to students grades 4-8. Each student will receive three 30-minute private lessons a month. Lessons will be scheduled through the Calendly app. Ms. Roderick will be teaching during school hours as well as evenings through 8pm. Band lessons can fit easily in your child's schedule, regardless of their learning plan! You may register online at www.adwband.com. Please contact Ms. Roderick for any additional questions at neena.roderick@gmail.com.

