



THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

BRIDGES



WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG ❖ APRIL 29, 2021

FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

This has been a hard year for everyone no doubt. The demands of virtual learning and now concurrent teaching have been daunting for our teachers. I am very proud of the efforts that the teachers of St. Matthias have consistently demonstrated. While all of the public school teachers stayed home, teachers in Catholic schools across the country taught from their classrooms. Some students, like our preschoolers and kindergarteners, have been here since the first day of school. Others have been gradually coming back. Your child's teachers have adapted to changing schedules, changing rosters, students with Covid fatigue and technology withdrawal, and the loss of interpersonal contact with the students they cherish. This coming week is National Teacher Appreciation Week. I encourage you to remember your child's teacher in prayer and with a note of thanks. In addition, we are looking for parent volunteers to cover one lunch and recess period (11:30-12:30) on Wednesday or Thursday, May 5 and 6. If you are fully vaccinated and can help, please call, or email *Mrs. Blackburn*.



Our Superintendent of Schools, *Ms. Kelly Branaman*, has recognized the valiant effort of the teachers in the Archdiocese of Washington and is celebrating them by giving them an extra day off. **St. Matthias will, therefore, be closed on Friday, May 28** to honor our teachers. We appreciate the sacrifice parents must make to support this decision and are grateful for your support.

The teachers and I are very grateful for the wonderful support that parents have provided. The parents of St. Matthias have been amazing! Your flexibility, patience and diligence in supporting your children's learning is remarkable. As in any crisis, a stronger bond has been forged. To say we are looking forward to a more normal school year in 2021- 2022 is a huge understatement. I hope the mutual support and admiration we have formed this year will contribute to a great new school year!

A MILLION THANKS

The school community is grateful to the April 17 parent work crew. The transformation of the Tot Lot and other grounds is amazing! We are especially indebted to the father of new student, *Natalia Robinson* for rebuilding and planting part of the primary garden.



Mark Your Calendar

Friday, April 30
Grade 7 Pre HPST
8:30 - 11:45 pm
NOON DISMISSAL

Monday, May 3
Scantron Reading
Grade 1

Tuesday, May 4
Scantron Reading
Grades 3 & 6
8th Grade Day Out
8:45 - 2:30 pm

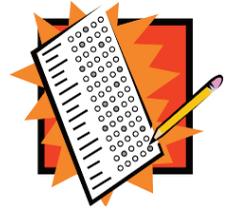
Thursday, May 6
Scantron Reading
Grades 4 & 5

Friday, May 7
CommUNITY Reads
ADW Science Test
Grade 8
NOON DISMISSAL

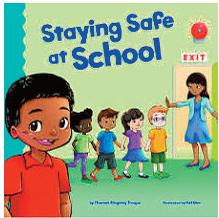


SCANTRON TESTING

All students in grades K-8 take the standardized Scantron tests at the beginning and end of the year. These tests measure each student's growth over the school year. The teachers use this data to set priorities for instruction for the following year and to plan instruction to meet the individual needs of their students. After testing 8th grade this week, **we have decided to test all Zoomies virtually**. Parents of students testing at home are urged not to help their children with the test. Scantron is an adaptive test, so if the child is provided answers or given clues, the test questions will continue to get more difficult. Teachers then have very unreliable data upon which they are making instructional decisions for your child. The best way that all parents can help their children with testing is to provide a nutrition breakfast on testing day and ensure that their children get adequate rest the night before. Parents will receive the test results the first week of June.



ALL PERSONAL SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM



Parents of children in grades K-8 are urged to read the letter from Mrs. Schratz that is attached to this edition of Bridges. The Personal Safety and Education Program is an annual child safety curriculum that is implemented in all elementary, middle and high schools in the Archdiocese of Washington. This program is usually implemented before Christmas, however, the challenges of this most unusual school year have resulted in our later implementation. Details of the curriculum are also attached. Any parents, particularly those new to the school are encouraged to carefully review it and contact the principal or school counselor with questions or to decline participation for their children.

STEAM NEWS AND IMPORTANT CALENDAR CHANGE

Over the summer our current computer lab will be transformed into a STEAM lab. In addition, we are adding a mobile STEM lab to the primary wing. The teachers will be working in teams to develop integrated STEM units to be implemented quarterly. We will be reaching out to parents to host a Career Day at school. The teachers have the opportunity to work with the University of Notre Dame's STEM faculty to incorporate engineering design and technology into their plans. The only time this professional development is available is Wednesday May 26 in the afternoon. Therefore, **dismissal on May 26 will be at noon**. The **Chick-fil-A lunch will move to May 27**.



ATTENTION PARENTS OF 6TH AND 7TH GRADERS



It is not too early to begin to think about high school options for your child. We hope that all families will consider what our Catholic high Schools have to offer. Financial Aid and scholarships are available to defray the cost of a Catholic high school education. The Annual Archdiocesan High School Fair will take place virtually on **May 15 from 9-12**. All 6th and 7th graders and at least one parent are urged to attend. This is an opportunity to see all the schools and get valuable information about their programs, financial aid, and requirements. See attached flier.

The 7th graders are taking the Pre-High School Placement Test **tomorrow at 8:30-11:30**. Zoomies will take it in Friendship Hall, while the Roomies will be in their homeroom. Results will be reviewed by teachers and parents to help prepare the students over the summer and in the fall.

PROGRESS REPORTS

The mid-point of the final quarter of this school year is Wednesday, May 5. Teachers will be emailing progress reports to parents of students who are in danger of failing due to low test scores or missing work. These reports will be sent out on May 10. Please check your child's grades in Rediker and make sure that missing work is submitted before May 5. Children who fail a subject for the year must participate in our school's IXL based summer school to return in the Fall. Summer school details will be discussed with parents of these children the week of May 10.

