



St. Joseph School, Fullerton

8416 Belair Road Baltimore, MD 21236 Phone: 410-256-8026 Fax: 410-529-7234

Monthly Newsletter

August/September, 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

St. Joseph School educates children Pre-K through eighth grade in the Catholic tradition. Our mission is to provide a positive learning environment in which every child is challenged to develop their potential: academically, spiritually and morally."

St. Joseph School Mission

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Wow, what a summer! Despite the record breaking heat, followed by torrential downpours, our school building was ready when the teachers arrived to open their classrooms on August 16th. They were greeted with bright, shiny floors, new carpeting and more new technology than you can shake a stick at. With the slight respite from those 90 degree days, they were busy organizing books, moving desks and chairs and adding cheerful decorations to make the room welcoming for the children. During the week of August 22nd, the faculty gathered downtown for Mass and workshops then continued with professional training here for the remainder of the week. We are raring to go!

St. Joseph School has truly been given an abundance of God's blessings. We are part of a vibrant parish lead by a pastor who is deeply interested in the success of our school. The sense of community continues - from the experienced and gifted teachers, to the conscientious parents, to the enthusiastic yet kind children - we are a family to serve each other through good times and bad. Our Home and School Association and newly formed Father's Club dedicates countless volunteer hours to improve our school and to keep tuition affordable for all. It is in this spirit of support that we begin this school year with the hope that our children will be the beneficiaries.

This newsletter highlights some of the many improvements and updates we will see this year. The most visible change is our new Sports Court, which is close to completion as of this writing. This 60 X 70 foot fenced play area will include two courts for games like soccer and hockey as well as areas for hopscotch and four-square. Our PE teacher will be introducing the many activities available in gym class. We want our children to play creatively and peacefully.

This year, every classroom will be bursting at the seams with new technology. Through the prudent use of IDEA grant money and the purchase power of one of our parents, we have obtained MIMIO (Smartboard-like) systems for interactive learning in every classroom.

READ MORE...READ MORE.....READ MORE

(To read the remainder of the newsletter visit www.stjoeschool.org now and click on the Newsletter link.)

All classroom teachers will also have access to Discovery Education . This system is jammed packed with video and audio clips that will give the children a much clearer picture of the material they are learning. There are segments from every content area – Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Music, Art, Spanish even PE- all designed to enhance the lessons and enrich or remediate the learning experience.

While we are working hard to engage our children, as always we ask for your help. Please continue to support your child in their school experience. Ask them about the specifics of their day. Make them retell what they learned. Look at the teacher’s website and at school material. Go through their bookbag each night. Ask about the condition of their desk (the inside can tell tons about a child). If take home work is good say “You should be proud – I am!” If not neat or of poor quality, ask “Is this your best?” Set reasonable and attainable goals and your child will respond accordingly.

As we begin this new school year, I wish you the very best. I am here to serve you. Please come to me with your questions and problems. You can reach me by email, phone, written note, or in the office (in the neighborhood too – Safeway and Brick Bodies!) Don’t hesitate to keep in touch.

Peace,

Mrs. Phyllis Karko

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August	
21	HASA Family Picnic 2-4 lower field – (CANCELED due to weather)
22	Homerooms posted on website
25	Orientation – New Students in Gr. 1-8
29	School Opens 8:05, Gr. 1-8, Noon Dismissal, Kindergarten by appointment
30	Noon Dismissal Gr. 1-8. Kindergarten by appointment
31	Full Day Gr. 1-8, K dismisses at 11:30, HASA Innisbrook begins
September	
1	Full Day Gr. 1-8, K dismisses at 11:30, Opening Liturgy 8:15 All Welcome
2	K dismissal at 12:45, Full Day Gr. 1-8
5	School Closed Labor Day Holiday
6	Milk begins, K dismissal at 12:45, Pre-K by appointment
7	Kindergarten full day, Pre K by appt. HASA Hot Spot Raffle begins
8	Pre K by appt., Hot Lunch Packets sent home, HASA General Meeting and Back to School Night Gr. K-5 6:30
9	Pre K begin regular sessions
14	Band Demo 8:30, Back to School and HS Information Night Gr. 6-8 6:30 PC
18	600 Club Party and Drawing (for school benefit) in Parish Center
21	Race for Education Kick Off Assembly Innisbrook sale ends

22	Hot Lunch Packets due National Junior Honor Society Induction 2:00 in Church
24	AOB High School Regional Fair held at St. Michael's School
28	Hot Spot Parking Lot Raffle Ends, Parent Access Training 8:05 in Computer Lab
29	Parent Access Training 2:05 pm in Computer Lab
30	Noon Dismissal – followed by Professional Meetings for Staff, HASA Bowling

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Opening Liturgy

During the course of the school year, each grade level plans and serves one special Mass. We open school with a special celebration of Mass on **Thursday, September 1st**. The Grade 6 Team and faculty hope you can join us for our Opening Liturgy. Again this year, our children will be attending Mass every Thursday at 8:15. Please try to find a time during the year to worship with us.

Innisbrook Kick-Off Assembly

In order to keep tuition affordable, our Home and School Association sponsors several fundraisers throughout the year. Many are for the convenience of our patrons, like Market Day and Joe Corbi. The Innisbrook Product Sale is the biggest and most successful fundraiser, raising more than \$20,000.00 that goes directly into the operational budget of our school. It is our primary fundraiser and we ask that all of our families will participate, even if it is in a small way, to insure our success. To get in the spirit, the children will enjoy the kick off assembly on Friday September 2nd. Participation prizes will be shown and we will have a demonstration of the excitement of the ‘Money Machine’.

Home and School Association General Meeting

Our Home and School Association (HASA) will hold their first of three general meetings on Thursday, **September 8th** beginning at 6:30 in the Parish Center. During the business meeting, they will explain their newest projects and the teachers will demonstrate our latest school technology paid for, in part, by the HASA. After the meeting, we will move to the school for Meet the Teachers sessions for grades K to 5. Please plan to attend the HASA meeting in the Parish Center in order to enter the building. The school front doors will not be open. You must enter through the Parish Center.

This year, the Meet the Teacher will be held on a separate night for the Middle School and the 6th grade will be included. We will also meet in the Parish Center at 6:30 on **Wednesday September 14th** to discuss general Middle School expectations and to preview the High School process for this year. Information about shadow days, testing, & interviews and financial aid will be presented by the teachers and Mrs. Karko. Special packets and forms are distributed to 8th

grade parents at this meeting with explanation on how they must be completed. Middle School parents are encouraged to attend both evenings.

HASA Quarter Auction

Plans had been in the works to host a “Quarter Auction” this fall. However, due to unforeseen problems, it will not be held this fall as originally planned.

Instrumental Music Program

Under the instruction of Mr. Wes Osment, The St. Joseph Band has won countless awards both within the archdiocese and in national competition. Children are invited to begin band in the 4th grade but welcomed to join at any grade thereafter. Mr. Osment will introduce the instruments to the children in the morning of **September 14th** (various times) during the band demonstration in the Parish Center. Please call the school office if you would like to attend to learn more about the program. You are welcome to attend the demo if the program is new to you.

600 Club

Don't miss out on the fun of participating in the 600 Club Raffle and Party. By purchasing a ticket for the raffle, two people will be admitted to the party in the Parish Center on **September 17th**. Tickets are \$100 and can be shared between as many as five people. This is a wonderful way to support our school. As of this writing, there are fewer than 40 of the 600 tickets left and you could be one of the many lucky winners of up to \$10,000 dollars. Call the Parish Office (410) 256-1630 for details.

Race for Education Kick-Off Assembly

In 2005 we held our first and most successful Race for Education. This fundraiser, sponsored by our School Board, has been held every other year in the fall to raise money. The moneys from the 2005 race built our playground, the 2007 race funded the recently completed Sports Court, and the 2009 race funded tuition to keep the increase that year to a minimum. The School Board agreed that this year's race would also support the budget by funding technology and classroom improvements.

The children will learn how the Race for Education works and what they must do to make it successful during the Kick-Off Assembly on Wednesday, September 21st. They will bring paperwork home to you to complete with the names and addresses of your family, friends and associates who would like to support our school in a small way. We really need the parents to do their homework to make our race a success.

High School Regional Fair

Representatives for all the local Catholic high schools will make presentations and be available to answer your questions at the annual Regional High School Fair. This year's fair for our area is slated to be held at St. Michael's on Belair Road in Overlea. (St. Joseph hosted this last year.) All parents and students in the 7th and 8th grade are encouraged to attend.

Parent Access Training

Any parent who is new to St. Joe's and has children in grade 3 to 8 is welcome to participate in our Parent Access Training to learn how to view their child's grades during the marking periods and receive the password. The training is available on line now however, parents may attend an optional in person training at 8:05 am on **September 28th** or at 2:05 on **September 29th** in our computer lab. Reservations are not needed. You simply need to show up at the front door and we will escort you to the lab.

HASA Bowling Party

School dismisses at noon on Friday, **September 30th** for professional activities in the afternoon. We will be learning all the ins and outs of the new Mimio Interactive Whiteboard system. Families are invited to join the HASA Fall Bowling Party at Perry Hall Lanes in the Perry Hall Shopping Center. A responsible adult must be present for every child who attends.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome & Farewell

After 20 years of service to Catholic education, Mrs. Michele Freeburger left our community this summer to relocate in New York State. We thank her for her many years of service to our children and wish her the very best as she begins her new life.

We are thrilled to announce that Mrs. Kathryn Diggs has agreed to fill her position as Social Studies and Math teacher in the Middle School. Mrs. Diggs has served St. Joseph for 20 years as a teacher in grades 2 and 4. She is ready for something new, and I know our children will be happy to have her as their teacher again.

Please join me in welcoming our new 4th grade teacher, Ms. Caitlin Loraditch. Ms. Loraditch has a Master's degree and is certified in Elementary Education and in English. She has worked as a 3rd grade teacher in Baltimore County and, yes her name does sound familiar. She is the daughter of Mrs. Kerry Loraditch, our Math teacher. We are blessed to have her join our faculty.

Latest and Greatest in Technology

Through a generous contribution from our Home and School Association and use of funding from IDEA, *Mimio Interactive Whiteboard Systems* have been purchased for the classrooms. We have also completed the purchase of the LCD projectors for the remainder of the classrooms. The projectors will work with both the Mimio system and with our new online video library from *Discovery Education*. Films and video clips appropriate for all our grade levels and across the subject areas will offer further explanation and enhancements to engage the children.

The *Mimio* technology will allow our children to see the lessons come alive as they participate individually to respond and engage in problem solving. Using the resources in *Discovery Education* teachers will enrich the lesson, showing examples and offering other explanations of the content. More training on this technology will be provided to teachers during our professional time in the afternoon of September 30th.

Scrip Makes Its Debut

The following is a letter with details of our exciting new program which offers families tuition discounts and supports our school at the same time. Please read how *Scrip* card purchases can really save you money on school tuition.

Dear St. Joseph School Parent:

We're pleased to share some exciting news about a new fundraising program for our school. It's called "scrip", and it's the fundraising program that works while you shop.

Scrip is simply a word that means "substitute money" – in other words, scrip is gift certificates from national and local retailers. They're the same gift certificates that you buy at the store. Many popular retailers participate in our scrip program including Target, Safeway, Shell, Home Depot, Outback Steakhouse and many, many others.

You're probably asking yourself how these stores help us raise money. It's simple -- scrip participating retailers agree to sell gift certificates to our school at a discount. Member families like yours buy the certificates for full face value, they redeem them for full face value, and our school keeps the difference as revenue. And scrip is exciting, because everybody wins:

- *The retailer gets cash up front and repeat business...*
- *You get a powerful fundraising alternative that involves no selling...*
- *Our school gets a regular source of revenue.*
- *You earn money toward your personal tuition kitty for next year*

The beauty of scrip is that you put your regular household shopping dollars to work. You earn money for our school without spending a single additional penny. Just spend your regular shopping dollars with scrip at the stores that participate in the scrip program! And scrip can be used for just about any household purchase including food, clothing, entertainment, gasoline and even dining out.

We'll be sharing information about our new scrip program in the weekly Constant Contact emails you receive from the HASA. We'll go over all of facts about scrip, provide enrollment

forms, and answer your questions. If you have any additional questions, give us a call, send us an email or grab us on the sidelines... we're happy to fill you in!

The SJS scrip program promises to be a simple and effective fundraising program. Thanks for your support!

Sincerely,

Your Scrip Coordinators

Kelly Smith

Erin DiIorio

kellycklein@hotmail.com

erind122@gmail.com

443-564-9296

410-913-5872

Emergency Notification – Alert Now

Last year we began to use *Alert Now*, the rapid communication system that allows our school to deliver routine and emergency communication in a timely manner. Here are a few reminders so that you can be prepared if we call you:

- Messages will come into your inbox from noreply@alertnow.com.
- Please set your SPAM filters to accept this address.
- Your Caller ID will display the school's phone number for routine messages or 411 for emergencies.
- Please make sure that if your phone number or email address changes at any time that you notify the school office immediately.

HASA Hot Lunch Program

Again this year, our HASA will sponsor hot lunches for the students on Tuesdays and Pizza on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays. The HASA will send home a packet with all the information about the Hot Lunch Program on September 10th. Please contact Mrs. Tamara Ryerson or the school at office@stjoefullerton.org if you are able to help out with the Hot Lunch Program.

STAND Volunteer Training

Anyone who wants to volunteer to work with or around children must complete the Archdiocesan STAND Process. To begin you must obtain a packet from Mrs. Brooks in the school office. You are required to provide references, view a training video, read booklets and provide you social security number to complete the background screening. The entire process must be complete before you are allowed to be present and volunteer around children.

Standardized Testing

We have received the results of the Standardized testing that we took in the spring of this year. As in the past, we continue to show solid scores with increase in score results as individual children move through the grades. Our teachers have done an overview analysis of the reports

and will look more carefully at content weaknesses as they plan their curriculum goals for this year.

Continue to emphasize the importance of accuracy and full understanding as you work with your child. Your work in the past has paid off. Our test scores are available on the Archdiocesan website and are linked to our website under 'Academics'.

Our teachers have met to analyze the results of these tests. They have used the general cluster scores to discover areas of strength and need. Then they wrote goals for this year to assist and support teachers in modifying their content accordingly.

CLASS NEWS

Early Childhood and Primary Grades Collect for the Poor

Last year, teachers in grades Pre-K to 2 coordinated a campaign to collect money from our children for the children in Haiti. As a group they contributed a total of \$643.00 from their pocket money to give to the poor.

We are proud of our littlest children for learning at such an early age to give to others by giving of themselves.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to 5th grader Angela Estavillo, who won the 2011 Knights of Columbus Maryland State Catholic Bee on June 4th. She was awarded an Immaculate Conception medallion, certificate of appreciation and a cash award. She also earned a matching award for our school. Angela was featured in an article in the Catholic Review on July 14th but she was incorrectly identified as the runner-up in the competition.

Congratulations, also, to Nicole Tien on her piano performance at Carnegie Hall on Sunday May 15, 2011. She was selected to play Sonata Opus 36, No.1 before a packed house in the Weill Recital Hall. She did an outstanding job and we are very proud of her.

THANKS TO...

Last May our Student Activities Committee sponsored a gently used book drive for the Baltimore Reads program. Through your generous donation 855 books were donated to the **Books for Kids** campaign. The volunteers at Baltimore Reads want to thank you for sharing with others the books that you were finished reading.

I would like to extend a huge personal 'thank-you' to **Brian Petr** who spearheaded the construction of our new Sports Court. A team of parents, Mrs. Goldbeck and I met to discuss

what we would like to see out there and then Mr. Petr began his research of surfaces and contractors. It has been a long process but certainly worth the wait. Brian's perseverance and many hours of service made it all possible. Brian Petr is a parent of Alex and Amelia, serves on our School Board and is a 'founding father' of our Fathers' Club. (Julie, thanks for being so patient through all this!)

On behalf of the **Fathers' Club**, we would like to thank the following volunteers that helped us install the benches and the beam for the **Sports Court** on Saturday, August 5th:

Jose Rivas
Kris Kurcoba
Tim Coffman

Brian Petr
Dan Poole
Andy Szczybor

Mark DiIorio
Rob Medeiros
Steve Streckfus

Thanks to **John Berg and Bill Kuchmas** for installing all the projectors and screens and for completing classroom and building renovation projects. Thanks also to **Gaelen O'Neal, Jonathan McEllwee, Drew Berg and Zach Berkheimer**, our summer work crew, for their hard work in getting the building ready. They worked steadfastly, completing the floors and moving furniture and books on many a day with 90 plus temperatures. This is the hottest summer I can remember but the team worked courageously to prepare this huge building for our children in the 8 or 9 weeks when the teachers were away.

The School Board of St. Joseph's School would like to sincerely thank all of those who participated in this spring's **School Board Parent Survey** to help us better market our school. The survey has been analyzed and has offered much information. It clearly shows that parents believe that St. Joseph's School is a thriving, successful hub of early education. Participants' confidence in both the religious instruction and life preparedness as well as in academic programming and delivery, surely demonstrates that the mission of the school is being fulfilled. By the same token, our parents as shareholders are simply hoping to advance a good situation to the next level. Opening better lines of communication among administration, faculty, and parents would get more parental involvement. Using the skills of parents as a valuable resource could only help open more educational possibilities. Having more productive HASA meetings rather than just conferences and announcements could bring a cohesiveness among all shareholders. Finally, since the participants perceive that the parish supports the school so very well, advertising the accomplishments of the school and its students would let the community know more about the great success that is St. Joseph's Elementary School.

Joe Pazourek
Vice-Chair, SJS School Board

Thanks to our **Home and School Association** for funding some of the technology that we installed this summer. We are committed to providing our children with a dynamic learning experience and your support of the HASA will help us in this effort.

BITS AND PIECES

Building Improvements

Despite the intense heat this summer, our work crew has been sweating it out preparing our school for the 2011-2012 school year. Our aging building requires continual maintenance and frequent updating to keep our building safe and attractive and to keep up with our technology demands. In addition, many of these items were obtained through government funding. When you return you will see:

- Projectors with ceiling mounts added to the remainder of the classrooms
- Interactive Mimio systems to work with the projectors
- MimioVote Kits with student response units, capture kits and pads
- White Boards installed in classrooms to work with the Mimio Systems
- 2 Logitech Webcams and a notebook computer
- Cables and splitter boxes for all projectors
- 10 Hovercam document cameras (we began this last year – teachers love them!)
- Sonic Wall content filtering subscription
- Kurweil 3000 Text-to-Speech software license
- Subscription to *Discovery Education* to download educational materials and video clips
- New carpeting installed in 5 classrooms
- Window sash caps adjusted and replaced to assure that all windows open easily.
- Repairs to a pipe that broke outside the building under the lobby windows
- All classrooms cleaned
- All Bathrooms cleaned
- Floors waxed
- Rugs shampooed

And.... .The new and exciting **Sports Court** adjacent to our playground

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION NEWS

During the year, through the efforts of the Home and School Association funds are raised using a varied of bonus programs. Some of these programs are ongoing, others have a beginning and ending point. But in all cases they raise money for our school by points you accrue through purchasing their product. Some of the proceeds are as follows:

- Boxtops for Education*** from the spring campaign.....\$2,722.63
- Giant*** grocery receipt purchases.....\$ 347.74
- Escrip*** for Safeway and certain on line purchases.....\$ 374.12
- Target*** for in store and online purchases.....\$1,078.04



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IMPORTANT

August 31, 2011

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Please carefully read the following changes to the handbook and sign and return the slip below.

Change in the Weather/Emergency Closing or Delay Policy and Procedures

Beginning this school year, Archdiocesan schools will **always** follow the directives made by their local public school systems when weather or emergencies force a change in schedule. With this in mind, St. Joseph School will follow Baltimore County Public Schools' lead in all decisions regarding closures, delayed openings or early dismissals.

Effective immediately, families must listen to the general media (television or radio) and follow the plan for the Baltimore County Public Schools regarding closings and delayed openings. No other notification will be sent via the media listing St. Joseph School specifically. No *AlertNow* notification will be sent for these weather related closings and delays. We will also follow their directive for early dismissal but you will receive notification via *AlertNow* stating the time we will close and any other pertinent information.

In short, if Baltimore County is closed for weather emergency, we will be closed. St. Joseph School will *not* be listed separately.

Moving forward, St. Joseph School will announce separately in the media *only* when Baltimore County Schools have a scheduled day off and we are scheduled to be open. Our website and Facebook page are not venues for emergency notification.

Phyllis Karko, Principal

Carol Mackechnie

From: Claudette McDonald [ClaudetteMcDonald@watermarkjourney.com]
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2011 11:22 AM
To: Carol Mackechnie

Carol,

Every once in a while, we have a group that is so outstanding it prompts the tour guide to request we let their teacher know how wonderful they were. Your group fits this situation.

One of our guides, Mike Zitzman (Squire Mike) wanted you to know he enjoyed having St. Joseph Fullerton on tour.

In his words.....

"I had St Joseph Fullerton for a tour yesterday and I want to tell you about these kids:

First off they are OUTSTANDING!! They were well disciplined, quiet when I was talking and their knowledge of Maryland history was outstanding. They were very tentative, and interested in what I was talking about. I asked questions about the signers of the Declaration of Independence from Maryland and they knew who they were. Also while talking about the John Shaw flag, they knew the difference between the present flag and the John Shaw flag – White Strip first, the Blue Field went all the way across the flag, and the stars have 8 points.

They knew all about Francis Scott Key and the fact that the melody of our National Anthem is from an Irish song. They really liked the Crypt of John Paul Jones and did have some knowledge about him. They were very impressed at the noon formation.

Please forward to note own to the school, because these kids are a credit to their teachers and the community."

Regards,

Mike Z

Thank you from all of us!

Claudette

Claudette McDonald, Group Tour Specialist
Watermark
Phone 410-268-7601 X.104
Fax 410-626-1851