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# St. Margaret of Antioch School

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*The pathway of hope for children...is first of all education.*

*-Pope Francis*

August 18, 2023

Dear St. Margaret of Antioch School Family, *WELCOME BACK!*



We missed you and look forward to opening the doors to beautiful smiles of eager learners.

As we embark upon our **70<sup>th</sup>** year, the birthday of SMS (est. 1953), we have added additional focus, an intentional deep dive into the lives of the saints and the Values of the Month Initiative, which directly support our motto *To Serve, Not to Be Served*. Our focus areas will continue supporting our overarching goal of becoming the best version of ourselves, authentically Catholic and academically excellent.

“Saints are people before they are saints, and they may be made of every sort or kind of person” (Chesterton, 1). Yes, those ordinary people who have done extraordinary things for one reason - their love of God. How blessed we are as a school community to be able to call upon those who speak to our hearts and provide faith-life experiences to reflect upon. Each year, PK 3 – 8 students study two saints in addition to our Patroness, St. Margaret of Antioch, and the Regional Patron, St. Dominic. These four saints are honed in on, and spiral review has created a treasure trove of opportunities to reflect, regroup, and possibly course correct, thus creating a clear road map to heaven, our goal as Catholics while on earth.

Our 2023-2024 school year will begin on September 7<sup>th</sup> for students in grades K – 8, and September 11<sup>th</sup> for Prekindergartners. Morning and after care will begin on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to let your teacher(s) know.

St. Margaret of Antioch School has been serving the Rockland district since 1953 and we are thrilled to be able to consistently provide a faith-based and academically rigorous education in support of overall learning goals. This is a partnership between parent(s)/guardian(s) and educators. This said, please review the following as we collectively prepare for a seamless start to the [2023-2024 school year](#):

## Schoolwide Updates

- SMS Spirit Days (noted on the Google calendar) are scheduled once a month. We will participate in service projects that align with a Saint and the Value of the Month, and creator, and patroness, St. Margaret of Antioch; more information to come.
- We received our new Science curriculum (Grades K-8) which is aligned to the [Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\)](#) and vetted by the teachers last year.
  - SAVVAS
  - Feel free to visit [engageny.org](http://engageny.org) to familiarize yourself with the [NGLS](#)
- Math curriculum in:
  - Grades 3 – 5 will implement a new math curriculum – Eureka Squared (E<sup>2</sup>) to support specific math goals identified from observations, MAP and past NYS data; the teachers will speak more to this change at BTSN.
  - Grades 6-8 will implement support via the Maneuver the Middle program; the teacher will speak more to this change at BTSN.
- The Clever platform continues to grow housing all the most popular online tools we use to support the rigorous curriculum; Seesaw, IXL, Google Classrooms, Sadlier, MAP and more. See communications from the Archdiocese of NY and your child/ren’s teacher.
- Electronically generated Emergency Sheets will come home for parent/guardian review and signature – please make any changes on the sheet and return the sheet not later than 9/22.
- A new addition to support attendance - automated attendance calls will be made.
  - You must call the nurse’s office no later than 8:00 am (the start of the school day) to report an absence.
  - Attendance calls and emails will be generated immediately after teachers take attendance in the morning.
- Pick up/schedule changes - If you plan to change your child/ren’s schedule with an early pick up or dismissal change, you must inform the main office by connecting with a live person no later than 2:00 PM – **do not send a change via email or voicemail after 2 PM.**

## HSA Events

- 9/7 – First Day of School Ice Cream Fundraiser at KING KONE in Pearl River from 3 – 5 PM.

## Planning Points

- Morning and After Care will be available for all; see the registration form found under **Parent Resources** on the school site. The program will begin Monday, 9/11.
- Back to School Night on Thursday, 9/21 @ 6PM (PK3 – 8) – this night begins in the auditorium.


## Busing

- \*\*Please send in a copy of your child/ren’s bus pass on September 7<sup>th</sup>; an additional copy should stay within the child’s backpack.
- We need this pass to identify your child’s bus from the morning and afternoon, not necessarily the same bus.
- Transportation provided is an extension of the school day and thus all Code of Conduct rules noted in HB apply (see Parent Student Handbook).

## Entry

- Doors open for all at 7:45 AM; doors close promptly at 8:00 AM. After that time, your child is marked late.
- K-8 will enter via the Gymnasium doors (busers and walkers).

***To Serve, Not to Be Served***

- Cars will **not** have access to N. Magnolia St.; please park your vehicle in the lot and **cross at crosswalk** – buses still travel north on N. Magnolia St., and we must follow the law and remain safe.
  - Do not park on N. Magnolia Street as one turns onto the street from Washington Ave. – this is a hazard.
  - **Please follow traffic stamps to ensure the safety of all.** 
- PK 4 will enter via the Central Avenue door (at the back of school near rectory garage), please park on Central or in large lot and **cross at corner crosswalk**; N. Magnolia is very busy with bus traffic.
- PK 3 will enter via the main entrance; 34 N. Magnolia Street; middle door.
- Parents may not enter the bldg. with their child unless they have an appointment; in this case, come to the main entry to check in with the main office.
  - Teachers and staff are at entry doors to supervise and should not engage in extended conversations that may detract from their duties. Please make an appt to speak with a teacher or staff member, so you have their full attention.

#### **Lunch**

- The HSA will continue to host FUN Ice Cream Fridays on full day Fridays (see electronic Thursday HSA communications for updates)

#### **Dismissal**

- On **full days**, students will be dismissed in a timely manner beginning with busers at 2:40 PM, followed by walkers at 2:43PM; **half day** dismissal times will be at 10:57 AM and 11:00 AM respectively.
  - Busers will be escorted to their buses.
  - Walkers/adult pick-up – please wait along N. Magnolia parking lot barriers until the children reach the dismissal area; KG will make their way toward Central Ave. followed by others in grade descending order.
- PK 3 will dismiss via the main entrance beginning at 2:30.
- PK 4 will dismiss via the Central Avenue doors at 2:30.

#### **Faculty & Staff**

We say goodbye to:

- Miss Nicole Zara as she relocates and prepares for her nuptials.
- Miss Nicole Theiss – ADAPP Counselor as she embarks upon a new journey.
  - I will continue to keep you abreast of changes to faculty & Staff.

#### **Uniform**

We will be holding students accountable to the explicit expectations (see **Uniform Reference List** found on our school site).

#### **Parking in N. Magnolia Lot**

- *In the afternoon*, all people are expected to park their vehicles closest to Central Avenue (last parking row).
  - **Rule of thumb:** park to the right of the tree, closest to Central Avenue
  - Picking up a half day PK 3 student – consider parking in the Washington lot or the Parish Lot as we close the street and yard for recess at 11:20 and you will not be able to get out of the lot or off the street – cross at the cross walk.
- Buses are released first, kindly allow them to exit the parking lot first.

#### **In-Persons Orientations & Back to School Night**

- Orientation Meetings for PK-KG
  - KG – Wednesday, 9/6 from 2:30– 3:30 in rm 9; bring your student.
  - PK 3 – Thursday, 9/7 @ 8:30 am – rm 3
  - PK 4 – Thursday, 9/7 @ 9:00 am and 6:00 pm (choose one) – letter sent from teacher – rm 1
- BTSN - Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup> Grades PK – 8<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00 PM; please enter the gymnasium for the start of the night; you will then visit classes via the bell schedule that evening.

#### **School Supplies**

Grades K can drop their supplies off at the orientation. Additionally, K – 8 can slowly bring in school supplies the first week of school. Feel free to drop them in the auditorium on the first day of school. They must be labeled with your child's name and class. Our JHS students will help to distribute them to classes.

#### **Summer Reading & Math Work**

A reminder to all students that summer reading and math packets have been shared. We understand that we had many late registrants, however all received practice materials. Please do your best to work diligently and bring them to class as directed by the teacher.

#### **Blackbaud for Yearly Tuition & Fees**

All families will be invoiced via email with a due date of the 20<sup>th</sup> for each month. For those on a monthly plan, your first payment should have been addressed; thank you for your attention. Please visit your account often to review details noted and possible fees added (sacramental, graduation, PreK supplies, etc.). I strongly urge you to contact the main office immediately when a concern arises. We are here to help make this a seamless process.

#### **Parent Student Handbook**

In the **Parent/Guardian Student Handbook**, you will find our expectations for each SMS student as well as the rules, regulations, policies, and guidelines for the year. Once received, parents and students should read the handbook and keep it handy for reference during the year. **Enrolling at St. Margaret of Antioch School and acknowledging these policies means you understand and support these policies.** The PGSHB is posted to the school site under **Parent Resources** for your review and reference; however, your Handbook Acknowledgement Form and additional forms requiring your attention will be sent home with your child the first week of school. **Please sign and return these forms no later than Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

#### **Income Survey** (One per family for K - 8)

These surveys play a very important role in ensuring we receive funds via districts from NYS and it is imperative you return your form. Information shared from the past two years allowed us to participate in online summer courses (21-22 and 22-23) and after school courses (22-23) through Catapult and supported the fees associated with IXL.

**Please be reminded that the taking of pictures or videos of other students while on school property is strictly prohibited.**

Again, welcome back!

Sincerely,

Patricia Maldonado, *Principal*



***To Serve, Not to Be Served***