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August 15, 2022

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

My hope is you and your loved ones are enjoying summer and finding time for family fun. Change from more relaxed days to structured days can be challenging for children of all ages. Therefore, as your family prepares for a shift to a more structured tempo, please review the suggestions below so you can ready your child's body, mind, and spirit for the start of school.

Make an earlier bedtime

For children who have been used to waking up late and going to bed late, now is the time to slowly begin moving back bedtime and having them get up early in preparation for the early hours of school. Children should be getting 9-13 hours of sleep each night.

Reduce screen time

Now is the time to slowly reduce daily screen time. Each day, slowly reduce the amount of time your child is on screens so that by the start of school, it will be easier for them to transition to the focus and attention they need to invest in learning at school.

Increase movement

If your child has been more sedentary, begin expecting each day they do some moving. A walk, swim, or some movement every other day for between 10-20 minutes will go a long way.

Establish a routine

Children feel safe and find comfort in routines. Begin having a set morning routine and then a routine before bed. This should include proper hygiene and simple chores like straightening up their room or tidying a play space.

Pray as a family

God seeks an intimate relationship with each one of us. Saying grace before a meal, praying at bedtime, and making time to pray as a family are all small and powerful ways to connect with God.

Please read and review the below information about the start of the new school year. In the meantime, if you want to reach me, please feel free to email me at chris.robertson@sjssct.org.

In peace,

Chris
Principal
St. James School

Faculty & Staff Update

Ms. Oligino is having a medical procedure in August and is looking to return to the office in early September. For those who know Ms. Oligino, you are aware how special she is to our community and how committed she is to the children, staff, and families at St. James. Please pray for Ms. Oligino that her surgery is successful and that she has a speedy recovery. Ms. Bernie Lynch will be in the Main Office while Ms. Oligino is recovering. Thank you in advance for your patience while Ms. Oligino is away.

There are a few new hires at St. James School. There were also a few changes in teacher assignments. In order to support and encourage teachers' development and expertise, it is not only common but also beneficial when teachers take on a new assignment – especially if the change is aligned with a teacher's passion and desire for continued professional growth. We are excited about next year's team and I know the teachers are excited as well!

***** NEW Staff *****

Mrs. Janine Kyburz: Middle School Religion Teacher

Janine Kyburz will be the new 6th-8th grade Religion Teacher. Mrs. Kyburz is a familiar and beloved face at St. James and we are so excited she is returning to our community to teach religion to our Middle School students. Many of you know Ms. Kyburz's amazing and inspirational leadership in shaping and overseeing the Middle School's *Living Stations of the Cross* experience. Welcome back to St. James, Mrs. Kyburz!

Ms. Beth Cherico: Art & MakerSpace Teacher

Taking on the role of Art and MakerSpace Teacher will be Beth Cherico. Ms. Cherico will teach and also oversee the work being created in our Makerspace. Ms. Cherico's love for the arts and her appreciation for the connection to technology will bring our art program to a new level. Welcome to St. James, Ms. Cherico!

***** Faculty Changes *****

Ms. Livia Olsen: 1st Grade Teacher

Moving to 1st grade from 5th grade will be Ms. Livia Olsen. Though highly successful in 5th grade, Ms. Olsen has a passion for early literacy and loves teaching young children the foundations of reading and writing. This past spring, she worked closely with a literacy specialist on cutting-edge assessment techniques for early readers. Welcome to 1st grade, Ms. Olsen!

Ms. Kristen Barrett: 5th Grade Teacher

Ms. Kristen Barrett will move from 1st grade to 5th grade. In discerning this move, Ms. Barrett noted her experience as a 5th grade teacher and her strong desire to prepare older students to transition to Middle School. Though she will miss the younger students, she is excited to apply her skills and talents to help the 5th graders progress socially and academically. Enjoy 5th grade, Ms. Barrett!

Mr. Adam Bensen: Middle School Humanities

Joining us in the Middle School as a full-time Humanities teacher is our own, Adam Bensen! Mr. Bensen (formerly the Music Teacher) is beginning his Master in Teaching English in the Fall and is excited to

focus on the teaching of English, Language Arts, and History. Mr. Bensen and Mr. Eire will both be teaching Humanities in Middle School and will share in the planning and development of the Humanities program. Mr. Bensen will also continue to be the Middle School Coordinator.

We are currently in process of hiring a Music Teacher and a Preschool Assistant Teacher. More information to come!

Below is a list of the teacher assignments in each grade:

NAME	POSITION
Mary Merly	Preschool Teacher
Search in process	Preschool Aide
Christie Crosby	Grade K Teacher
Jan Beirne	Kindergarten Aide
Livia Olsen	Grade 1 Teacher
Beth McCormick	Grade 2 Teacher
Lisa Flader	Grade 3 Teacher
Ann Battaglia	Grade 4 Teacher
Kristin Barrett	Grade 5 Teacher
Janine Kyburz	Grade 6 Homeroom/ Middle School Religion
Sue Greenlee	Grade 6 Homeroom/ Middles School Science
Beth Cherico	Grade 7 Homeroom/ Art & MakerSpace
Joseph Klimaszewski	Grade 7 Homeroom/ Middle School Math
Adam Bensen	Grade 8 Homeroom/Middle School Humanities
John Eire	Grade 8 Homeroom/Middle School Humanities
Search in process	Music
Rosa Pelaez	Physical Education Teacher

Please note: the Middle School Team will be sending out a separate email with more details about Middle School including information specifically for 6th- 8th grade families. In addition, an email from the office will also be emailed to Middle School families communicating their child's homeroom.

Get Involved at St. James School – Volunteer Opportunities

This is the year to get actively involved in the life of the school and there are plenty of opportunities to do so! Since all parents are required to spend 30 hours volunteering for St. James School, we developed a list of ways you can support your child's school. Click here to access the volunteer opportunities as well as sign-up for events of your choosing:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040D45ABAЕ2CA1FC1-stjames>

As a Catholic School, we have limited support staff and we truly rely on parents and caregivers to help us. At the same time, we are well aware that some families are not in the position to give their time and would rather pay for the time they would give to the school. Therefore, families who are unable to

volunteer hours have the option of giving \$300 in lieu of the 30 hours. This is charged at the end of the year for those parents who choose not to volunteer.

Two New Spaces

New Library

St. James School is opening a library that will be located between the 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms. This will be a place students can go to take out books or read quietly (with an adult present). This space will also be a location for Academic Support.

New World Language Lab

The former Spanish Room will become the new World Language Lab. Students will visit the lab to learn one of several languages using an online language learning program called Rosetta Stone. Parents can have their child continue learning Spanish or choose another language (French, Italian, German, Latin, Mandarin (Chinese), or Japanese). If you would like your child to learn a language other than Spanish, you need to complete the World Language Learning Choice Form by Monday, August 15. Click below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScc8_X1QrHYKoCbi7PLPZZpbVqr18JmxyHSDQnmhvxekedA9w/viewform?usp=sf_link

Start and End time for School

The official school day begins at 7:45 am with the start of daily prayer. Any student not in their classroom and in their seat ready for morning prayer at 7:45 am will be considered tardy. All students are highly encouraged to arrive at school by 7:40 am (latest).

Morning drop-off in front of the gymnasium begins at 7:30 am. The doors will close at 7:40 am so the principal and other adults can be ready for morning prayer. Once the doors close, students must be brought to the office to be checked in by an adult.

Dismissal is at 2:10 pm. Bus students are dismissed first and the students whose parents or caregivers are in the afternoon car-pick-up line. Once the cars move through the line, children whose parents park in the parking lot are then dismissed to their parents waiting by the opening of the gym.

Please keep in mind that the first two weeks, morning and afternoon carpool is SLOW. Thank you in advance for your patience!

For information on the Afternoon Dismissal procedure, click here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B-iy1FqCxGmGKilJ-3qOHDSATyGimgqh/view?usp=sharing>

St. James Family Handbook 2022-23 and School Calendar 2022-23

Please look for an email with the links to these documents by the end of the week. One major update in the Family Handbook is the updated **St. James School Uniform Policy**. To access the school's Uniform Policy for 2022-23 and see how it will appear in the 2022-23 St. James Family Handbook, please click the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1peMGEIyFjn-YCq1W-r_8hWz9ok6o7Se/view?usp=sharing

Upcoming St. James School Community Events:

- St. James School Planting Party (Wednesday, August 24 from 8:00 am-10:00 am)
 - Come with your family to weed and beautify the gardens and green borders around the school. All parents, caregivers, and children are welcome! Please bring a small shovel and gardening gloves. If you have extra shovels, please bring them to share with other participants. Donuts and water will be served.
- St. James School Mothers Club Get Together! (Thursday, August 25 at 6:30 pm)
 - Inviting all St. James School moms to a fun, evening social event at Knapp's Landing in Stratford! This event will kick off the newly formed St. James School Mothers Club. Appetizers and the first round of drinks are courtesy of the school. This will be a wonderful way to connect with other moms and build community as we begin the new school year. Please RSVP here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSewGTK4mSPV7_QTz4XDduKBhfh3nWvWs95XgIP1hqpSIAg5-g/viewform?usp=sf_link
- Welcome Back to School Family Picnic (Tuesday, August 30)
 - Please join us for the **Welcome Back to School Family Picnic** the Tuesday before the start of school. All Preschool through 8th grade families are encouraged to join us for this school-wide community event. Please bring a blanket and picnic dinner to enjoy with your family. Dessert will be supplied by St. James School. In addition to breaking bread and sharing some wonderful St. James School spirit, this will also be an opportunity for children and families to meet the teachers and see the classrooms. Below is the event schedule:
 - 4:45-5:00 pm - New Families Orientation with Mr. Robertson (Cafeteria)
 - 5:00-5:20 pm - Meet the Teacher (All K-8 parents/caregivers and children visit their child's classroom to meet their teacher)
 - 5:25 pm - Opening Prayer and Welcome (outside in front of the gymnasium)
 - 5:30 pm - Picnic (find a spot with old and new friends, spread a blanket, enjoy a summer picnic)
 - 5:45 pm - Dessert (served in front of the gymnasium)
 - 6:30 pm - End of picnic – thank you for attending!

Important Upcoming St. James School Events

Wed., August 24 St. James School Community Gardening (8:00-10:00 am)

Thursday, August 25 St. James School Mothers Club Social Event (6:30 pm)

Tuesday, August 30	Uniform Exchange (4:00 – 6:00 pm)
Tuesday, August 30	New Family Orientation (4:45-5:00 pm)
Tuesday, August 30	Meet the Teacher (5:00-5:20 pm)
Tuesday, August 30	Welcome Back to School Family Picnic (5:25-6:30 pm)
Thursday, Sept. 1	First Day of School – FULL DAY OF SCHOOL (Early Dismissal for Preschool ONLY)
Friday, Sept. 2	FULL DAY OF SCHOOL (Early Dismissal for Preschool ONLY)
Friday, Sept. 2	Back to School Day at Zach's Yogurt in Stratford (open to close)
Monday, Sept. 5	Labor Day – No School
Thursday, Sept. 22	Back to School Night (K-8 th Grade)

Please review the St. James School Calendar. If you have any questions, please contact Victoria Oligino, Administrative Assistant at 203-375-5994 or victoria.oligino@sjssct.org