



MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL

Post Office Box 500006 • Saipan, MP 96950
670.234.6184 • 670.235.4751 (facsimile)
www.mountcarmelsaipan.com • www.facebook.com/mtcarmelcnmi

November 18, 2020

Dear Mount Carmel School Families,

With Thanksgiving just next week and Christmas and the holidays just around the corner, it is hard to believe how quickly the time is passing. So, to help us all keep pace with what's coming up, we want to share some important updates with you, which are summarized in these bullet points and explained in more detail later in this letter.

- Our accreditation has been renewed with high marks from our accrediting commission.
- We will celebrate Thanksgiving with a Thanksgiving Wall and by launching a year-long food drive for Karidat.
- In celebration of Thanksgiving Day, we are extending the Thanksgiving Break to include Wednesday, November 25.
- You can save money, help the school, and spread Christmas joy with our Holiday Coupon Fundraiser.
- Help us with after-school pick-up by making dashboard signs or placards with your child's grade level and name.
- We are planning to increase face-to-face classes for 7th through 12th grade students beginning in the 3rd quarter in January.
- Remember that tech support is available.
- Stay safe, stay vigilant, and stay healthy!

ACCREDITATION RENEWED WITH HIGH MARKS

As you may have heard, Mount Carmel School's accreditation was renewed with the Cognia Accreditation Commission. With the support of all our stakeholders, including parents and students, we were able to host a virtual accreditation review with findings that spoke very highly of our school:

- ***We earned an above average accreditation score.*** Based on Cognia's Index of Educational Quality (IEQ), Mount Carmel School's IEQ score is 293, which is higher than the Cognia IEQ range of 278.34--283.33.
- ***We were recognized as achieving high impact in several categories,*** including our mission, leadership and governance, stakeholder engagement, and strategic use of resources.
- ***We were commended for some key strengths,*** including our culture of family, a dedicated board and leadership, and a diversity of stakeholders.
- ***We were given clear and useful guidance for improvement*** in important areas such as curriculum, systemic and systematic processes and procedures, formalized supervision and evaluation, and data analysis.

We look forward to using the valuable insights of this review to develop our next strategic master plan and continue improving all that we do and all that we are. We also thank all of you for contributing, in one way or another, to the success of our school. We could not have achieved this milestone without your support. Thank you!

CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING

Despite all our challenges, we have been blessed with so much, all of which warrants our thanks. To celebrate as a school family, we are inviting all our students next week to decorate Student Council's Thanksgiving Wall with posts about what they are thankful for. The wall will run along the first floor hallway of the Maturana Building and post templates will be provided by Student Council.

We are also kicking off a year-round effort to help Karidat feed members of our community that are suffering from food scarcity. For next week, we invite all students to bring non-perishable foods that will be packaged by homeroom and delivered to Karidat. Then, beginning in December, grade levels will take turns in leading food drives throughout the remainder of the school year.

NO CLASSES NEXT WEEK WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

An annual tradition at Mount Carmel School is our Thanksgiving Feast, in which we all come together to break bread and enjoy each other's company. While the school's Leadership Team and stakeholders explored ways to safely hold a feast this year that complied with COVID-19 guidelines, despite our best efforts, we determined that it would be too risky to proceed with the feast. So, in lieu of a feast, we are extending the Thanksgiving Break to include one additional day, Wednesday, November 25. As such, we will not have face-to-face or online classes on that day. We hope and trust that this will give everyone in our school family more time to celebrate with their own families.

HOLIDAY COUPON FUNDRAISER

Save money, help the school, and spread Christmas joy! We are excited to announce the launch of our first-ever Holiday Coupon Fundraiser! Each coupon booklet costs only \$50 and is filled with coupons valued up to \$400 from your favorite local establishments, including Fishing Tackle, Hermans Bakery, Kensington Hotel, T Bar, Tribe Marianas, Bubba Gump, and more. It's the perfect way to save money while you get everything you need for your Thanksgiving meal, shop for Christmas gifts for the family, or prepare for the many holidays ahead. Proceeds from the fundraiser will aid our academic programs and services, infrastructural improvements, and COVID-19 mitigation efforts. To purchase a booklet, visit the Business Office and for more information, visit <https://mountcarmelsaipan.com/mcs-holiday-coupon-fundraiser>. Lastly, with only 200 booklets available, be sure to get your booklets before they run out!



HELP US WITH AFTER-SCHOOL PICK-UP WITH DASHBOARD SIGNS

We want to thank everyone for their patience, understanding, and cooperation with our after-school pick-up procedures. We are doing all that we can to improve and streamline the process to make it safe yet convenient for our families. You can help by preparing a sign or a placard that has your child's grade level and first and last name printed in large letters, and then hold up the sign or placard when driving up. This will not only speed up the process, but it will help avoid "wrong" orders from being placed. Thank you in advance for your help in this.

MORE FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES ON THE WAY FOR 7TH THROUGH 12TH GRADES

We also want to thank all of you for your patience and understanding as we have done our best to comply with COVID-19 guidelines, keep our school safe, and support the learning and growth of our students. As part of our efforts, we are committed to increasing face-to-face classes for 7th through 12th grades when we launch the 3rd quarter in January. More details will be provided sometime in December.

TECH SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

Please remember that we have two dedicated teachers ready to offer tech support to parents and students as needed, Ms. Filmah Buenaflor and Ms. Randee-Jo Barcinas-Manglona. Ms. Buenaflor and Ms. RJ hold tech support office hours and can be reached by email at the following addresses:

- Filmah Buenaflor: filmah.buenaflor@mcsknights.com
- Randee-Jo Barcinas-Manglona: rb.manglona@mcsknights.com

STAY VIGILANT. STAY SAFE. STAY HEALTHY.

Our diligent and collective efforts as a community have kept the CNMI one of the safest places in the world with one of the lowest transmission rates in the nation. Likewise, here at the school, we thank all our families for working with us and cooperating with our COVID-19 mitigation efforts. Whether teaching your children proper hygiene, complying with our procedures and protocols, or following traffic safety procedures, you have helped our school safely conduct face-to-face classes. However, we must not become complacent. We must remain vigilant. As such, remember these three simple Ws:

- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- **Watch your distance** by maintaining a physical distance of at least 6 feet between yourself and other people you don't live with.
- **Wear a mask** in public settings around people who don't live in your household.

As we have shared many times before, this new normal is a dynamic situation that changes on a regular basis. The school's Leadership Team, guided by Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez, Board Chairman Vicente "Ben" Babauta, and the school's Board of Directors, are making decisions based on the best and most accurate information available at any given time. Please be assured that no matter what we do, we will provide ample notification and information to all students, parents, teachers, and families via email, our website, all our social media outlets, and local media. In other words, you will definitely hear from us and know what to do.

Indeed, these are challenging times, but we have survived devastating typhoons, economic recessions, and many other tragedies. But, we're all in this together, and with **FAITH** in our Lord, **HOPE** for a better tomorrow, and **LOVE** for each other, we will get through this. We are **KNIGHT STRONG**. We are **MARIANAS STRONG**.

Sincerely in Christ,



Galvin DeLeon Guerrero, EdD
President