

St. Thomas the Apostle School Newsletter

February 3,
2017



STA Families,

Catholic Schools Week was a great success! Everyone at STA enjoyed celebrating our Catholic school this week by attending Family Mass, helping at our open houses, or helping run fun activities for the students. The students even got to compete in the first-ever STA Olympics, where students played in a dress-up relay race and wrapped the teachers like mummies. Thank you to everyone who helped out with Catholic Schools Week at STA.

On Thursday, we are having our annual State of the School meeting. All families are expected to attend this important event. Please plan on being at this meeting on Thursday from 6:00-7:30 at the STA gym.

Finally, our Valentine's dances are starting today. Our Father-Daughter Dance is tonight, and our Mother-Son Dance is next Friday. Thank you to our Home and School Association for planning these great evenings.

Happy Super Bowl Weekend!

Mr. Gallo

Important Dates

STA School Advisory Board Meeting – Wednesday, February 8 (7:00-8:30 AM)

STA Blood Drive – Wednesday, February 8 (3:00-6:00 PM)

State of the School Meeting – Thursday, February 9 (6:00-7:30 PM)

NO SCHOOL- Teacher In-Service Day – Friday, February 10

Mother-Son Dance – Friday, February 10

State of the School Meeting

We are having our annual STA State of the School Meeting on Thursday, February 9 from 6:00-7:30 PM in the STA gym. We will be discussing the financial state of the school, plans for next year, information on re-registration, and updates on important school events from the fall. We also will be sharing information on our upcoming STArry Night fundraiser in April. Any family who attends this event can receive 1 service hour. Please plan on attending this event on Thursday.

Re-Register for the 2017-18 School Year

Below is a reminder about the discounts you can receive for registering early:

Registration Date	Registration Fee	Savings
January 17 - February 13	\$100	\$95
February 14 - February 24	\$125	\$70
February 27 - March 13	\$150	\$45
March 14 - March 24	\$175	\$20
April 3 - August	\$195	\$0

We currently have 43 students registered for next year. This is ahead of our pace from last year. Remember that our goal is to have 200 students registered by March 24.

We will be discussing information on re-registration in greater detail at the State of the School meeting on Thursday.



Parent Volunteer Opportunities

AM and PM Parking Lot Duty - 1st Grade Parents Lead

Lunch Helpers - Daily throughout the year from 11:00-12:00

Field Trip Chaperones - Please contact your child's teacher if interested

Help Pre-K students pack-up for dismissal - Contact Mrs. Lendi or Mrs. Pruitt



Catholic Schools Week Open Houses

We hosted two open houses for Catholic Schools Week and had 25 families attend. Thank you to Tareema Jean-Baptiste for organizing these events, and for all of our teachers and parent ambassadors who came to support these open houses. Please encourage any potential STA families to register for a tour of the school online at our school website.

Reminder About Drop-Off

I have noticed that more students and families are entering the building in the morning through the south door off of the parking lot. Please remember that you should always enter through the main door off of Woodlawn unless told otherwise. This rule is in place for safety reasons. We are better able to supervise the adults and students coming into the building at the Woodlawn door. Always plan on entering through this door in the morning. Parents exiting the building can exit through the south door, but please do not let any adults in the building through this door.



Highlights from Catholic Schools Week

There was plenty going on at STA this week to celebrate Catholic Schools Week. I encourage everyone to follow us on Facebook to see pictures and videos from the week. Below are some highlights:

- Sunday Family Mass led by the STA students and choir
- Visit from Alderman Leslie Hairston. Alderman Hairston toured the school, answered questions from the 7th grade, and even danced with our kindergarten class!
- Science experiments in the classroom led by High Touch High Tech Science
- The STA Olympics
- Classroom Buddy Activities
- A fun lunch sponsored by the Home and School Association
- The Father-Daughter Dance tonight

Tardy Policy Clarification

Some parents have expressed confusion to me about our tardy policy this year. Any student who is not in their classroom, ready to start the day at 8:00 AM is tardy. This means that students can't be walking to their room or in the hallway at 8:00 and be on-time. From 8:00-8:15, students do NOT need to go to the office for a tardy slip. However, they are still tardy. After 8:15, students must go to the office for a tardy slip. We changed this procedure in August to ease the traffic in the office. The tardy bell time did not change from last year.

Finding Time to Speak With Mr. Gallo

I have heard questions from some parents about the best ways to get in contact with me. I want to make sure that I am available to hear parent questions and concerns, and give the appropriate time and thought to all of you. For that reason, I would like to remind you of a couple ways I can be available:

- I am always available by appointment to meet. You can schedule a time to talk with me by emailing me at tgallo@stapostleschool.com or calling the school office. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with anything you may need to speak with me about, big or small.
- I check my email regularly throughout the day. I try to quickly respond to any parent questions sent to me via email.
- I will always be at the monthly parent coffee klatches. These gatherings are both an opportunity for parents to connect and for parents to have devoted time to speak with me. I encourage all of our families to attend these coffees and come with any questions or comments you have for me. Our next parent coffee is Thursday, February 16 at 8:15 AM in the parish hall.

School Closing Procedure

Winter has arrived, and this brings the possibility of inclement weather. We will not open school if the weather creates unsafe conditions for bringing children to and from school. If we determine to close school, you will receive a message through School Messenger alerting you of the closure. You will receive an email, text message, and phone call alerting you that school is closed. We will also post news on the closure on our Facebook page, school website, and on the Illinois School Emergency Closure Center. Please make sure to look for this alert and be prepared for a possible school closure if there is severe weather.

Open Houses and Tours at STA

Below is a message from Tareema Jean-Baptiste, who is coordinating admissions for our school:

Share your STA spirit!! Spread the word to friends, family, neighbors...etc about STA! School tours are every Wednesday and Friday at either 8:30am or 9:30am. There will be two open houses this year Jan. 31st from 5-7pm and March 16th from 5-7pm. To register for either a tour or open house please visit our website www.stapostleschool.com or email Tareema Jean-Baptiste tjeanbap@stapostleschool.com

General Reminders

- Please remember that there is NO SCHOOL Friday for a teacher in-service day.
- I will be out of the building Monday after 1:30 PM and Wednesday after 8:30 AM for meetings with the archdiocese. Mrs. Damico will be out of the building on Tuesday for a meeting.
- My graduate school classes have resumed this week. I will be leaving right before dismissal on Tuesdays to make it to my 4:00 PM class downtown. This class goes until May.
- Please remember that all families need to sign up on Track It Forward to log your service hours. All families need to complete 20 service hours and log them on Track It Forward. Please contact Mr. Gallo if you need help with your Track It Forward account.
- We have an All-School Mass Tuesday. 5th grade will lead the Mass.
- We need some parent volunteers to help open student lunches from 11:00-12:00 daily. Please let Mr. Gallo or Mrs. Damico know if you are interested. This will count for service hours.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at tgallo@stapostleschool.com