

# ***Special Events Calendar Information & FAQs***

\*This page is dedicated to describing some of the events, etc. that happen at St. Joseph School. When in doubt, ask the office or your child's teacher...but these descriptions may help you better understand the 'happenings' around our school!

## **Used Uniform Closet**

Throughout the school year we take donations of gently used school uniforms to make available for other families to pick up at "used uniform sales" held at the beginning and end of the school year. This closet is perfect for families when looking for additional clothing sizes and/or additional uniforms for their child's inventory, etc.

St. Joe's also uses this Closet for extra clothing during the year in the event of a milk-spilled shirt or a hole in the pants during class. Clothes can be returned clean the following school day.

Items in this Closet are not sold but a free will Donations are accepted and appreciated. Borrowed clothes should be returned clean the following school day.

## **Book Fair**

As a fun way to continually foster our students' love of reading we have at least one Book Fair during the school year. We have a book publisher sponsor our event (typically Scholastic in the past years). The Book Fair has countless genres, authors, types of books and styles of literature available for purchase.

Students get to see the Book Fair offerings on a "preview day" which is one of the first days of Catholic Schools week and make their pre-selections to take back home to share with their parents. Also on this day Teachers get to make their wish list for their classroom. On their "buy day", the students purchase the books that have been allowed by their parents. A portion of the proceeds of this event comes back to SJS in the form of free books for our library!

## **IOWA Testing**

Each year, currently in October, students in grades 1-7 take the IOWA test of basic skills. This standardized test is a proficiency test for Nonpublic Schools. The scores are a snapshot of your child's achievement and should be viewed in conjunction with his/her progress in class. The IOWAs are also used to see growth from year to year.

Grades 2, 4, and 6 students take the Iowa assessments only. Grades 1, 3, 5, and 7 also have CogAT testing to measure cognitive learning styles.

The Iowa tests scores are shown in percentage in the NPR (National Percentile Rank) which shows your child's performance relative to others who took the test in the same grade/age frame, NOT the percentage of correct answers

The GE (Grade Equivalent) section of the scoring indicates what a typical student in the grade shown would score on that test. Ex: If a child scores a 6.2 in reading when he is in fourth grade, he is reading at a 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 2<sup>nd</sup> month level. GE scores are not a prescription for grade placement, but merely to estimate a student's developmental learning level upon the time of testing. Ideally a student would increase his/her GE (from last year) by one full grade in each area, but realistically most improve by 0.4 – 0.6. However, a decrease in the NPR does not necessarily mean a lack of progress. Specific IOWA questions can always be directed to your child's classroom teacher.

## **Special Persons BINGO**

Each year, typically in October, our students spend a morning with a special person of their choosing. Each student chooses either a grandparent, aunt, uncle, neighbor, friend, etc. to attend Mass with and then accompany him/her to the Activity Center for refreshments and games of BINGO. This is a great way to get special people in to see our school while allowing the students to spend some time with their special people!!!

## **Bake Sale**

The Bake Sale is a fun way for funds to be raised for SJS while families showcase their baking skills. Past Bake Sales have taken place around Parent/Teacher Conference time or around Thanksgiving to allow for baked goods to be purchased for family events. Each family is asked to make homemade baked goods to sell. Families that cannot bake are offered the opportunity to "buy out" and may send money to the school instead. A day before the Sale, all items are delivered to school so parent volunteers may organize, sort, box and display all items for purchase. Proceeds go right to our school fund!

## **Giving Thanks Lunch**

The Tuesday of Thanksgiving week, our students share a simple meal of chicken noodle soup and a roll. This humble, yet wholesome meal is meant to show them we have a lot to be thankful for!! Many families go without food daily and we have so much to “give thanks” for, especially when we have something warm in our bellies. This lunch is provided by school and no lunch is required to be brought to school.

## **School Picnic**

At the end of each school year, our students get to spend our last full day of school relaxing and playing and eating lunch together before the summer break begins. Our picnic takes place at a local park in Trenton. Students are bussed per class to and from the park where they have access to snack, have a grilled hotdog for lunch, face painting and games while spending time with their friends. Students in preschool to grade 7 join us at the picnic along with their teachers and several parents.

## **St. Nicholas Shoe Drive:**

Each December the church sponsors a Shoe Drive. Shoes are collected for men, women, and children and are donated to needy organizations/foundations/shelters, etc. around our community. Shoes may be dropped off at school or at the parish office. Any types of shoe are appreciated!

## **Adopt a Family**

The Trenton Fire Department gives us the name of a needy Trenton family who could benefit from the love and generosity of the SJS families. Families donate freely to this family in an effort to ensure their Christmas is wonderful. There is a list of what the family needs (clothing sizes, ages of children, etc.) so our SJS families can tailor donations to fit the adopted families’ requests. The Trenton Fire Department comes to school to help our students wrap these gifts and donations and then takes all donations to be delivered from us to the family, who stays confidential the whole time.

## **Lenten Offertory Collection**

Each Lent, our school sponsors a charity that could use our help and support. We find out from the charity which items are needed to support its people in most need. Each week during Lent, a specified item for donation is brought to Tuesday Mass and the final donation boxes are delivered to the charity following Easter break. Examples include: socks, shampoo, toothbrushes and paste, & deodorant.

## **Christmas Program**

Our Christmas Program takes place on an evening in December. Students prepare and practice songs for months to be able to showcase their musical talents with our community at the Program. The Preschool students thru eighth grade students sing in musical sets. All students are asked to be picked up by their parents at the end of the Program in the classrooms.

## **Open House**

Open House occurs during the Wednesday of Catholic Schools Week. This is our school’s chance to show the community and any guests all the reasons that we are amazing! School Commission members guide new families on tours, students dress in uniform to show what a typical SJS student looks like, there are drawings for free tuition vouchers, scavenger hunts with prizes for student participants and checking out the entire school to see what SJS has to offer. Each classroom is open and classroom teachers have showcased student work so the hallways and interior rooms are filled with colorful displays of student progress.

## **Volunteer Hours**

Effective during the 2017-2018 school year, families have been asked to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours if your child is in Preschool and at least 20 hours if your child(ren) is in the K-8 school program. If you have both a Preschooler and a K-8<sup>th</sup> grader the fulfilled hours are 20.

Hours can be filled by doing classroom work to help the teacher, chaperoning Field Trips, assisting in the lunch room, spending time working with a committee, or helping with any of these special events listed. The Hours cannot be used at Church events (lectoring, Eucharistic Ministering, etc.) or Athletics.

## **School Commission**

Please see the descriptions of what that committee does and what it does not do:

What we do:

- Strive to promote St. Joseph Parish School within our community in Trenton as well as surrounding communities as we continue to grow enrollment
- Work to grow the relationship between the school and parish communities
- Support the Principal and Staff during the Accreditation Process, every 7 years and the interim, 3-year, site visits
- Serve as a representative for all parents of St. Joseph Parish School and as a communicator between parents and the Principal
- Serve as a discussion board between the parents and the Principal when issues are brought up to discuss at the Commission meetings, by the Principal or Development Director
- Assist the Principal in events such as Back-to-School Night, Catholic Schools Week, and Open House Hospitality hosting
- Assist the Fundraising Committee in brainstorming ideas to continue to bring funds to St. Joseph Parish School
- One member of School Commission represents the school at all Parish Council Meetings
- Maintain a positive, optimistic attitude and agree to disagree at times, when needed, for the overall betterment of St. Joseph Parish School

What we don't do:

- Make decisions or rulings on school issues
  - School Commission is truly an advisory board and parent/school support framework
- Address any personnel concerns or issues
- Decide upon the school-wide discipline policy
- Discuss specific student or teacher concerns during Commission meetings
- Develop or monitor the operating budget of the school

## **Who is Mrs. Harris?**

Mrs. Harris is a retired educator who has spent decades in education working with all kinds of students at differing levels of ability. She comes to SJS as a grandmother to one of our students and is our lead volunteer. Mrs. Harris can be seen working with students to catch them up if they have been out of class for an illness, vacation, etc. She also reads with the younger grades to get them acclimated to sight words and fluency. Mrs. Harris is also one of our substitutes. She is often in the classrooms covering for a teacher when she is away. Mrs. Harris is the St. Joseph School jack of all trades! Guaranteed, she has some time, in some way, worked with your student to ensure he/she is succeeding to his/her highest potential!