



**ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

## **SUMMER REMINDERS**

### **July 14, 2017**

The purpose of this bulletin is to serve as a reminder of some of the important news, policy changes, upcoming events, and activities for the end of the summer and the reopening of school. These are general announcements. If you need more detailed information, please refer to the school website at [www.stmcs.net](http://www.stmcs.net).

#### **A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2017-18 school year at St. Mark Catholic School! There are so many things to look forward to this school year, and I'd like to take this opportunity to give you a sneak peak ...

First and foremost, our brand new SmartLab will be ready for its debut the day our students return to school. Parents, students and staff alike have expressed their great excitement, and we can't wait to share it with the entire community. Graphic design, robotics, music, medicine, circuitry, structures ... it will all soon be at our students' fingertips! We are so proud to be one of only three schools in the entire State of Texas offering this cutting-edge facility to our students.

We're also thrilled that our popular After School Program has officially moved to the space formerly occupied by Ava's Place Daycare, allowing us the opportunity to enhance it further. This facility is already configured for childcare with separate study areas, a large gathering place for middle school students, and a "cool" outdoor area just for them. It's bright and airy and just wonderful. A huge improvement for our ASP kiddos! And from a parent perspective, pick-up will be a breeze -- just pull into the parking lot at 15th and Alma. We're looking for a few items to make the space complete. Please see below for details and contact me if you are able to donate any one of them.

Our Early Childhood Education building is literally bursting at the seams, and as a result of the new After School Program facility, we are able to relocate Mrs. Schell, our Preschool Music & Movement teacher. Her classroom will be moving to the main school building next to Mrs. Corsi. How wonderful that we can now house our entire Music Department in that space! The former

Music & Movement room will become a new Preschool classroom. Great things are happening at St. Mark!

We plan to continue our focus on differentiation and S.T.E.M. A new component being added to our S.T.E.M. program is further emphasis on presentation skills. During S.T.E.M. projects, each small group will be required to present and describe their projects to their class, and the class will then have an opportunity to ask questions. The goal is to help our students further develop strong presentation skills that will flow over into strong interview skills both for high school and eventually, the job world.

Thank you to all of our parents who responded to our End of Year School Survey. Your feedback is invaluable for our goal of continued school improvement. From your feedback, we learned that the changes we made to our All School Service Projects last year were well-received. Because of that positive feedback, we have even more ideas to try and build upon, so we'll pick up where we left off and look forward to introducing a further-enhanced program this fall. Not to give anything away, but I think it's going to be very exciting, and will hopefully go a long way towards helping students develop a true heart for service to others.

Equally exciting are the wonderful new staff members who will join our family this year. They each bring their own unique skill sets, a love of children, and excellent qualifications.

You may remember that we announced two new middle school teachers in one of the school bulletins in the spring: Ann Noel will teach 6th grade Social Studies and Religion, and Christina Maw will teach 7th/8th grade Language Arts. In addition, we've hired two new Aides in the ECE building:

Jessica Soliz will become a Kindergarten Aide. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and is certified as an EC-6th Generalist from the University of North Texas. Her background includes working as a nanny throughout her college years, and participating in the Kosmos Energy S.T.E.M. Teacher Institute.

Kathy Amaya is our newest PK4 Aide. Many of our students may recognize her, as she was formerly a beloved teacher at the St. Mark Child Development Center and Ava's Place Daycare from 2010-2017.

We also have a couple of internal moves to announce: Due to Ms. Escobar's departure in PK4, we are pleased to announce that Mrs. Tiffany Duncan will be taking over that position. She is already a beloved and highly qualified member of our PK4 staff, and we look forward to her having her own class!

With the addition of the new SmartLab and its ability to offer our students so much in the way of hands-on lesson extension, we are phasing out the Apps Lab this year. As a result, we are thrilled that Mrs. Beth Kyle will move over to the new position of SmartLab Facilitator. Her role will be to assist students with technology use in the SmartLab, which is a perfect fit given her strong background as a technology lab teacher. She will also continue in her role as Assistant Director of Technology for the campus.

We welcome our new teachers with open arms and look forward to new roles for those current staffers who will be spreading their wings with us!

I hope you are all having fun this summer, making wonderful memories. Of course, the educator in me also hopes our kids are keeping their minds active with learning, perhaps using the materials we sent home at the end of the school year, so that the start of the new year is strong for everyone.

Don't forget Sunday, August 6 -- Back To School Sunday. We start with 9:00 AM Mass, followed by a light breakfast, and then volunteer sign-ups, information on organizations such as Scouts, Drama Kids, etc., school supply pickup, Lion's Den spirit store, and the Used Uniform Sale. It is going to be a great way to start the year, combining "back to school business" with a spirit of fellowship.

And don't forget about the Pop-in Meet & Greet on Friday, August 11. Bring your child to school anytime between 9:00-10:30 AM. Meet the teacher, see the classroom, drop-off school supplies, visit lockers, take a selfie with our mascot, and visit with friends. Be sure to pick-up your back to school gift on your way out!

And finally, the first day of school is Monday, August 14. School doors will open at 7:30 AM (on August 14 only) and you are welcome to escort your student to his/her classroom. Don't forget to stop by the cafeteria for our annual HSA breakfast after you have dropped off all the kiddos.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to our campus soon!

Many blessings,



Patricia Opon  
Principal

## **NEWS AND REMINDERS**

### **Beginning of School Form**

The Beginning of School Form can be found [here](#). It must be completed, paid and returned to the school office, or via email to [rene.oconnor@stmcs.net](mailto:rene.oconnor@stmcs.net), by August 1, 2017. (Note: HSA membership fees are not included on this form. They will be collected separately after school starts.)

### **School Calendars**

Visit the [homepage](#) of the school website to access the most up-to-date versions of the 2017-18 school calendars. Printable versions of the Academic and Events calendars (subject to change) are located under the "Quick Links" section. A more detailed online version is located in the center of

the homepage. To add calendar dates to your electronic device, click on the red ".ICS" icon located at the bottom of the online calendar.

### Handbooks

Please review the following Volunteer Handbook, After School Program Handbook, and Athletics Handbook carefully. **They contain forms that must be signed and returned to the school office.**

Copies of all handbooks are accessible at any time on the school website.

**YELLOW highlights** indicate a new or revised policy that was present at time of registration in February. **BLUE highlights** indicate new or revised policies added since June 1.

#### 1. St. Mark Volunteer Handbook

A St. Mark Volunteer Handbook has been developed to assist all of our wonderful school volunteers. It provides general volunteer guidelines that we ask everyone to follow. **The last page of this handbook is a "Volunteer Pledge" form that every school volunteer must sign and return to the school office prior to serving. A new pledge form must be signed and submitted each school year.**

**Please [click here](#) to read the Volunteer Handbook, then print, sign and return the Volunteer Pledge form before beginning your volunteer service. Please also note that a link to the Diocesan Social Media Policy is included in this handbook, and that it contains a signature page that must also be signed and returned.**

#### 2. After School Program Handbook

An After School Program Handbook has been developed as a reference for our families who participate. **If your family will take advantage of this program during the school year, please read the handbook in its entirety, then complete the registration form located on the last pages of the handbook, and return it to the school office.**

**Please [click here](#) to read the After School Program Handbook, then print, sign and return the registration form by August 14.**

#### 3. Athletics Handbook

An Athletics Handbook has been developed for those 5th-8th grade families who have students participating on school sports teams through the Dallas Parochial League. It provides general guidelines pertaining to St. Mark and DPL athletics. **If this applies to your family, please read the handbook in its entirety, then sign the Parent Code of Conduct Agreement and return it to the school office.**

**Please [click here](#) to read the Athletics Handbook, then print, sign and return the Parent Code of Conduct Agreement before the first practice (click the link at the end of the handbook, and scroll down to the "Documents" section to access the agreement).**

Help Wanted - After School Program

We are in need of After School Program workers. The pay is \$15 per hour. Workers must be Safe Environment trained, must be available for Staff Development on Friday, August 11, and must be available to work at the following times:

Regular School Days: 3:00 PM until 5:15-6:00 PM

Early Dismissal Days: 11:30 AM until 5:15-6:00 PM (or until 3:00 PM on some major holidays)

Please contact Toni Jobses at [toni.jobes@stmcs.net](mailto:toni.jobes@stmcs.net) if you are interested.

### **After School Program Needs**

Our new After School Program location promises to be a great new facility for our students who participate in this program. We are in need of a few items to complete the space. If you are able to donate any of the following items, please contact [patricia.opon@stmcs.net](mailto:patricia.opon@stmcs.net).

Picnic Table

Outdoor Furniture

Beanbag Chair

Floor Pillows

Middle School-Level Board Games (i.e. Backgammon, Chess, Card Games, etc.)

Ping-Pong Table/Table Top

Foosball Table

Fabric (2+ feet per piece)

300-500 Piece Puzzles

Crafting Supplies

### **Back To School Events**

St. Mark will host several special Back To School events. For dates, times, and details, see the "Important Dates" section below, or [click here](#) for a printable one-page summary.

### **Grandparents' Day**

The St. Mark Catholic School Grandparents' Day will be held on Friday, September 29, 2017. More details will follow soon. In the meantime, please be sure we have complete contact information for grandparents or special friends you wish to invite (such as an aunt or uncle), including a mailing address. This information can be updated in the "Grandparent" section of Renweb (see instructions in the Renweb section below).

### **Student Summer Packets**

[Click here](#) for grade level summer reading requirements, summer activity packets, rising 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade summer service hour requirements, and other important summer information.

### **Safe Environment Screening & Training**

All volunteers (including Prefects) must be Safe Environment screened and trained. New volunteers must complete a background check, training session, and an interview. Those who have completed the initial training must still update their training each year. [Click here](#) for details.

We recommend that all Safe Environment training be completed over the summer to insure that volunteers are cleared by the first day of school and can take part in school activities. Even if your

retraining isn't due until later in the year, we encourage you to train over the summer if at all possible.

### **Uniform Guidelines**

Complete information about school uniforms can be found by [clicking here](#).

Please label all uniform pieces with the student's name. Academic Outfitters is able to embroider names inconspicuously on sweaters/vests. In addition, school families have utilized the services of two websites that can create inexpensive iron-on and stick-on name labels:

[Mabel's Labels](#)

[Inch Bug](#)

In an effort to avoid confusion when school begins, we'd like to stress a couple points regarding uniform shoe and hair policies:

\*For boys, Sperry shoes are **NOT** allowed. Please do not purchase them. They are expensive, and students will not be allowed to wear them to school.

\*For all students, hair guidelines will be strictly enforced. Please do not have your child dye or highlight their hair, and then send them to school. We will request you cut it out of their hair. This includes Kool-Aid, highlights, or other blinding agents. For boys, there are no mohawks or lines shaved into the scalp, and no extreme difference in hair length. Again, we will request it be cut.

If you have questions about the school uniform policy, please contact Pam Steinkirchner, Assistant Principal, at [pam.steinkirchner@stmcs.net](mailto:pam.steinkirchner@stmcs.net).

### **RenWeb Updates Due July 31, 2017**

If your contact information (address, phone, cell or emergency pickup) has changed, please update in RenWeb. To review and update your RenWeb information:

Log in to RenWeb by [clicking here](#). From the left hand menu, select "School Information," then "Web Forms" and then click on "Family Demographic Form."

There are six forms that must be reviewed and updated:

- Student Demographic Form
- Student Medical Form
- Custodial Parent Form
- Emergency Contacts
- Transportation Form
- Grandparents Form\*

Please do not add a student e-mail, student cell phone number, or automobile information.

\*A "Grandparents Day" will take place September 29, 2017. Please complete the contact information for all grandparents or special friends you may wish to invite (such as aunts/uncles) so

that we can be sure to invite them, including a complete mailing address. See further details in the "Grandparents Day" section above.

Note: The information in the HSA Family Directory is pulled from RenWeb. If you do not want your information included in the directory, be sure to check the appropriate section.

Please make sure all information is updated by July 31, 2017.

### **Cafeteria Accounts**

A reminder that parents may set-up a school Cafeteria account online where funds can be added and purchase activity can be monitored.

The August cafeteria menu has also been posted on the school website.

[Click here](#) for more information.

### **After School Program**

New registration forms are required for the After School Program each year. **Space is limited and spots are filled on first-come basis.** Registration forms can be found inside the After School Program Handbook above and may be turned in to the school office between July 31-August 11. The After School Program will be available starting the first day of classes on Monday, August 14. As a reminder, students must be registered for the After School Program **prior to attending.** It is not a program that is designed for drop-ins.

### **St. Mark Spirit Days!**

On the first Monday of school each month, students will be allowed to wear jeans, slacks, Capri-style pants, the school skirt or the school uniform pants/walking shorts with a St. Mark t-shirt or sweatshirt of their choosing. Students may wear any closed-toe shoe. This is a great opportunity for them to show their LION PRIDE!

Our Lion's Den spirit store sells a variety of shirt styles. [Click here](#) to place an online order. The Lion's Den is also open every Friday morning during the school year from 7:30-8:15 AM. Just check-in at the front desk and shop 'til you drop!

The first St. Mark Spirit Day will be Monday, September 11, 2017. For your reference, Spirit Days for the entire school year have been added to the electronic calendar located on the [homepage](#) of our website.

### **SAVE THE DATE for the 3rd Annual St. Mark All Souls Remembrance 1K/5K Run**

Mark your calendar for October 28, 2017. Interested in helping with the event planning? Contact [Marlene Ehring](#).

### **FROM THE ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT**

**Sports Physical Form Reminder:**

Fall athletes who have not turned in a current Sports Physical Form to the Athletic Director, Marlene Ehring, for the 2017-18 school year, must do so immediately in order to be cleared to participate in practices. Find the form in the Athletics Forms section of the school [website](#) (scroll to the "Documents" section to find the Sports Physical Form).

#### **2017-18 Athletic Fees:**

Athletic registration fees for fall sports are due August 1. Fees can be paid by check made payable to "St. Mark Catholic School," and sent to the attention of Marlene Ehring, Athletic Director (please remember to include your athlete's name and sport on the memo line), OR they can be paid online. The fees are as follows:

Football - \$125  
Volleyball - \$125  
Cross Country - \$70

For more information about these sports, and for payment instructions, please [click here](#) and follow the links to the individual sport pages on the school website.

#### **HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION NEWS**

##### **Help Needed - Used Uniform Sale - Service Hours Available**

Would you or your student like to volunteer to help with the Used Uniform Sale? [Service hours are available](#). To volunteer at the Used Uniform Sale, [click here](#).

Available hours:

\*August 5 - 3:00-4:30 PM (set-up), Lion's Lair Gym  
\*August 6 - 10:45 AM - 1:45 PM, Lion's Lair Gym

##### **Used Uniform Donations**

Used uniforms in good, gently used condition, will be accepted in the school office from July 31-August 4. St. Mark no longer accepts green pant/shorts donations.

##### **HSA Volunteers Needed**

There are still many opportunities to volunteer, including as Room Parents, so please [click here](#) to sign-up.

#### **IMPORTANT DATES**

**July 31:** The school office reopens. Hours from July 31-August 11 are Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Please call ahead to verify office hours during staff development sessions between August 7-11.

**July 31-August 4:** Used uniform donations accepted in the school office.

**August 6: Back to School Sunday - 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Join us for 9:00 AM Mass. Then, meet in the Cafetorium at 10:00 AM for breakfast and a Principal welcome. At 11:00 AM, the gyms will open for the school supply pick-up, used uniform sale, class lists, spirit store, general school information, information on clubs/organizations, and volunteer sign-ups. **Note: If you are unable to attend the 9:00 AM Mass and 10:00 AM breakfast, please plan to enter the gyms at 11:00 AM.**

**August 7-11: Staff Development Week**

These days are reserved for faculty and staff development sessions. While the main office may be open at select times during these sessions, there may be times that all faculty and staff are not available. If you need to come to the school office on any of these dates, we recommend you call ahead of time to verify if office staff will be available. Faculty will not be available for appointments during the staff development week.

**August 11: Pop-In Meet & Greet - 9:00-10:30 AM**

Visit the school buildings. Meet the teacher, drop-off school supplies, access lockers, attend a carpool line tutorial, take a selfie with the lion mascot, and receive your carpool sign, "First Week Survival Guide," and a "welcome back to school" gift. Also enjoy birthday cake in recognition of St. Mark's 35th anniversary year!

**August 14: First Day of School and Back-To-School Breakfast**

School doors will open early at 7:30 AM (first day of school only). Parents may escort students to classrooms. Students should be in complete school uniform. School hours are 7:55 AM - 3:30 PM (including Preschool). After morning drop-off, come join other parents in the Cafetorium for a Back-To-School Breakfast hosted by the Home & School Association.

**August 18: Early Dismissal - 12:00 NOON**

Lunch will not be served. The After School Program will be in operation until 6:00 PM. Please send a lunch with all After School Program students.

**August 21: Parent Information Night** for parents of students in Middle School, grades 6-8, at 6:30 PM in the Cafetorium, followed by classroom visits. This is a parents-only event, and is typically finished by 8:00 PM.

**August 22: Parent Information Night** for parents of students in Preschool - 5<sup>th</sup> grade, at 6:30 PM in the Cafetorium, followed by classroom visits. This is a parents-only event, and is typically finished by 8:00 PM.

**August 23: Individual School Pictures**

Students should be in complete uniform, including the school sweater.

**ENJOY THE REMAINING DAYS OF SUMMER!  
WE WILL SEE EVERYONE AT**

# "BACK TO SCHOOL SUNDAY" ON AUGUST 6.

St. Mark Catholic School, 1201 Alma Drive, Plano, TX 75075

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