



ST. SEBASTIAN SCHOOL

Celebrating Over 100 Years of Catholic Education

February 8, 2017

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Dear St. Sebastian Families,

I wanted to begin by simply re-capping our wonderful Catholic Schools Week, as it was a fun and meaningful opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate the gift of Catholic education, both at St. Sebastian and world-wide! The banner that currently hangs in our stairwell proclaims Catholic education as "An education you can have faith in." It is our mission to ensure to the best of our abilities that this is indeed our shared experience across the board - from faith formation, academic preparation, safety, extracurricular opportunities, and through the countless additional ways we can offer our students rich experiences in life and learning. Together may we always continually persist in fostering an exceptional experience for our students of St. Sebastian School in every way possible!

Last week's focus included all areas, comprising a robust and meaningfully rich Catholic education. Our week kicked off with Open House & Registration, as you know. On Monday, we held our annual "Bees" - Congratulations to Haylan Blanchard from 6th grade for winning the school Geography Bee and Emily Sveda from 8th grade for winning the school Spelling Bee competitions! Our all-school liturgy was a wonderful celebration with our parents and guests who could attend, followed by a reception. Our students had a few fun Spirit Days, showcasing their festive attire, as well as class competitions among grade levels in PE classes - Thank you to Ms. Zimmerman for all of her coordination efforts within that! The week ended as the entire school was introduced to Eucharistic Adoration; a form of prayer within the Catholic Church where we simply come before Christ, exposed in the Eucharist in a beautiful monstrance, to have quiet time for spiritual meditation and prayer. The students from K4 through 8th seemed to really enjoy this time, as we discussed how full of "noise" the world is, and that it is often difficult to hear the voice of God leading us among the many other distractions of life, competing for our time. Students shared ways they felt Jesus was calling them to grow...ways Jesus was affirming them...they shared heartfelt petitions they felt they needed Jesus' help with...or simply that they enjoyed the time to reflect for a while in the calm, prayerful space of the Church. It was truly a beautiful experience and wonderful way to close out our Catholic Schools Week. May we always be mindful of the great responsibilities - and joys - that come with our call to guide our children in intellect and heart, preparing them for service to God and others. Thank you for all who made the week as special as it was! God is Good!

On the Academic front, we are nearing the end of our mid-year MAP testing and are noticing impressive gains with a great number of our students! I am impressed by our students' efforts in taking their assessments with a serious mindset, focused on goals they have set with their teachers, and their desire to grow! This is a testament to the hard work and shared efforts between school and home as well. Once these assessments conclude, we will be certain to share more of that information with you. We also wish our Forensics team well, officially having begun competing last weekend. Lastly to note, I was able to spend Saturday in the St. Seb's gym, watching five of our teams compete on the basketball court. I was pleased to see they were great competitors and strong in sportsmanship. Clearly, we have much to take pride in, as well as celebrate here at St. Sebastian School! Together, let us pause to enjoy these treasured community moments, as well as continue pressing on with valiant effort to grow into our very best selves!

God bless you,

Ms. Grams

CHOICE REMINDER - AND CLARIFICATION - FOR FEBRUARY 17TH - ALL who are applying for the 2017-2018 Milwaukee Choice Program are strongly, strongly, strongly encouraged to apply - AND HAVE ALL DOCUMENTATION provided to us in order to "verify you" in the system NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17th (not 2/28, as previously communicated!). The reason for this is because Friday 2/17 is considered the "3rd Friday count date". Being the first of the Open Application months, returning students have priority of acceptance for re-enrollment over new families desiring to come (of which there are many this year, already). If you do not apply by that time, you are then in the general pool with all other new families. Ms. Grams will begin verifying all families who have submitted documentation at the end of this week. If you have ANY questions, or would like to request a time to come in to school and complete your Choice application, do not hesitate to ask!

FEBRUARY REMINDERS ON CONFERRING DATES:

- **Wednesday, 2/22** - A reminder that students are dismissed at 11:30am for Spring Conferences to follow after (see note below on Spring Conferences for more information).
- **Thursday, 2/23** - NO SCHOOL for students. - This day is now a day of Professional Development for our teaching staff, focused on Learning Targets, a deeper study of Standards-based instruction, and preparation for our March Professional Development day on Differentiated Instruction.
- **Friday, 2/24** - NO SCHOOL for all students and staff.

SPRING CONFERENCES FOR STUDENTS - In the last Newsletter, we shared that Spring Conferences will be scheduled on Wednesday, February 22nd, on an "as-needed" basis (by the teacher) and/or "as-requested" by the parent. Conferences will run during pre-arranged time slots, from 1-4pm and 5-8pm. Teachers will contact parents who they feel the need to schedule on for in the next couple of days of this week. The parent "Sign-Up Genius for scheduling (as we did for Fall Conferences) will then open on this coming Monday, the 13th. As always, throughout the course of the school year, know that you can always request a conference with your child's teacher as needed.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT NEEDED: Please consider becoming involved in any of the opportunities below, where we need parent support in order to best provide for students in these areas:

- **SAFETY:** Ms. Grams is convening a task force of parents who will study, revise, and implement a safer and more efficient means of pick-up in the afternoons at dismissal. Please let Ms. Grams know by next Wednesday, February 15th if you are able to participate in this important matter. You can contact her at: hgrams@saintsebs.org.

- "**St. Sebs SERVES**" Day: In order to best meet our mission of preparing students to serve God and others in their communities and the world, it is a goal to grow a school-wide service program, with hands-on opportunities for our children to engage in. If you are interested in this meaningful opportunity to help shape this program, please attend a brief morning meeting on Thursday, February 16th at either 7:30am or 4:30pm at school (your children can come hang out with us as well). If you cannot make either meeting, but are interested in participating, please let Ms. Grams know by Wednesday, February 15th (hgrams@saintsebs.org). We will begin our efforts in hopes of coordinating an all-school Lenten service day, ideally.

- **High Interest Day:** High Interest Day is always a day our students look forward to; perhaps the highlight of their school year! In past years, we have had dedicated parents coordinating this day, however, as shared at Open House, we currently do not have a team able to make High Interest Day a reality for this year, thus far. If you are interested in being part of a team to try and plan this great day for the students, please let Ms. Grams know. The more hands available, the easier on volunteers, as well as more enjoyable for the students' experience!

* If you know of anyone interested in helping with any of the areas above (whether parent, parishioner, alum, etc), all are welcome! Please let us know. The goal is to provide the best educational opportunities and experiences for our students as we can together!

NO SCHOOL – There is no school on Friday, February 17th, due to a teacher inservice.

ROSIE READER - Congratulations to the following students for their progress on the Rosie Reader program:

Completing the letter "D" in R-E-A-D-I-N-G:

K4 - Jonathan Sawyer

Completing the letter "A" in R-E-A-D-I-N-G:

K5 - Harper Fortmann

Keep up the good work!

READERS ARE LEADERS UPDATE: **Read N Quiz** - Students in grades 1st-5th are encouraged to read for pleasure and take reading comprehension quizzes using the Read n Quiz reading incentive program. After successfully passing quizzes, students earn points.

Congratulations to these students for earning the following points! Keep reading!!!!

10+ POINTS

Noah Jones

25+ POINTS

Maggie Murray

Maeve Bradway

VISION SCREENING – In order for our school to offer vision screening to our kindergarten students, and any other students with a concern, we need 2 volunteers. Prevent Blindness Wisconsin will be having a vision screening training specifically for Catholic schools on Friday, March 10th in the afternoon. We would receive a free vision screening kit with charts, ocular paddles, etc., courtesy of the Christ Child Society of Milwaukee. The trained volunteers could then arrange to conduct the screening at our school at their convenience. Please contact our school office at 453-5830 if you are interested in helping.

PARENT SPRING SOCIAL 2017 - SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, March 11th
7:30pm-11:30pm

Last year we celebrated our high school years with "Prom." But, we've graduated from those embarrassing days to more mature feats of immaturity. We now return to that all familiar basement, for an all familiar basement event. This year we bring you . . ."House Party". . . a post-prom evolution. More details to follow, but mark your calendars now and start generating buzz with fellow parents, friends, neighbors and parishioners.

PIUS XI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL 7TH GRADE SHADOW DAY OPPORTUNITIES

Thursday, Feb. 16
Monday, Feb. 20
Monday, March 6
Friday, March 10
Friday, March 17
Monday March 20
Friday, March 24

Registration is on-line at <https://www.piusxi.org/shadow-days/>

WINTER FARMERS MARKET - Our 8th annual Winter Farmers' Market & Brunch will be in the church hall on Sunday, March 5 from 9am to 12:30pm. This event fed nearly 500 people last year, and would not have been possible without the help of nearly 100 volunteers. We can't do it again without you! Please visit the online portal at <https://stseb.datapropeller.com/ParticipantPortal> or come to the Gathering Space after mass on Feb 12th or Feb 19th to see what volunteer opportunities are available and sign up. Contact Tonia Schmear at tonschmear@hotmail.com or (262) 754-2766 with any questions about volunteering.

ALUMNI NEWS – Former Seb's /DSHA student, Katie Shelledy, has received an Honorable Mention designation for her research proposal for the Barry Goldwater Scholarship. Katie was chosen from a field for more than 1,000 students from hundreds of colleges and universities nationwide.