

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 2

St. Mary's Academy
"Where Faith and Knowledge Meet"

Smabville.org

From the
Principal's
Desk

Greetings to all our SMA families for a happy and healthy New Year!

A big thank you to all of you for the many contributions and sacrifices you have made for St. Mary's Academy. Whether a gift to a teacher, a snack sent in for a party, or a word of encouragement to your child, or staff, nothing goes unnoticed.

Though we are making progress, the challenges we face to increase enrollment in our school remains, but the commitment from the Catholic Schools Office and my staff has never been stronger. The students remain positive and have taken our changes with passion and vigor. Your children remain both our reason for being here and our greatest asset. Thank you for your continued patience and trust. As we begin our enrollment campaign, we ask for your prayers and support so we may realize our vision for the future of St. Mary's Academy.

Mrs. Henderson



BITS AND PIECES

VIRTUE FOR JANUARY~ COOPERATION

Light The Way Dinner- It is not too late to make your reservations for the "Light the Way Dinner" which will take place on Friday, January 27th at the Oncenter Complex in downtown Syracuse. This dinner raises funds for financial aid across the 22 Catholic Schools of the Diocese. This year, Rev. Charles Vavonese will be honored for his years of leadership and service to Catholic Schools. Lemoyne College will also be honored for its longstanding commitment to Catholic Education in the Diocese. If you would like more information, please contact the school office.

5th and 6th grade to tour Cathedral- The 5th and 6th grade classes will take a trip downtown to tour the historical society and the Cathedral to learn all about the history of the Diocese. Lunch at Spaghetti Warehouse will follow!

Save the Date!

January 11

First PTA meeting of the New Year! Join us at 7PM in the cafeteria

January 16

There is NO SCHOOL today as we celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

February 6th

St. Mary's Academy magazine drive begins!

February 20-24

Winter break-NO SCHOOL

BITS AND PIECES (con't)

Catholic Schools Week- Each year, we set aside a week to reflect on what it means to be a Catholic School. The theme this year summarizes the essence and excellence of Catholic Schools- faith, academics and service. Our celebration will begin with Mass on January 29th, followed by an open house for new families from 12:30 – 2:00 PM. Encourage your friends and neighbors to visit our remarkable school! This year, we will include activities for the children for the entire week. Look for a special mailing to come home with a timeline of events.

Reapplication process- Traditionally, January is the month when the reapplication process begins. Any student returning in September must reapply. The Diocese also establishes a timeline for seeking tuition assistance. When that information becomes available, we will send it home in “backpack” mail. If your hesitation to reapply is the cost of tuition, please contact the school office to speak with Mrs. Henderson. We will continue with our retention scholarship for those students entering 5th and 6th grade and we will also offer a tuition credit if you refer a new family and they attend our school.

New York State Tests- New York State has sent out a schedule for tests. The dates are as follows:

Grades 3 through 8 ELA: April 17-19

Grades 3 through 8 Math: April 25-27

Grade 4 Science: (Performance-May 23-June 1), (Written-June 4)

January Service Project: Our January Service project will be “Pennies for Polio”. Our students will be working with the Rotary to collect pennies for the eradication of Polio in the world. Each classroom will have a canister to collect the pennies. We will collect pennies for the month of January.

Lunch Bucks- As a reminder, lunch bucks are worth \$ 1.50. They are not worth the cost of our school lunches. If you are using the lunch bucks from last year, please send in the difference, or enough lunch bucks to equal \$ 3.00.

After School- To lesson confusion at the end of the day and maintain safety for our students, all students will be put on their bus unless we have a note or a phone call from the parents. Often times, the students are confused, so we cannot take their word as to what they are to do.

Nurse's Notes

Scoliosis Screening- NYS Education Law requires that all children in grades 5-9 receive a school scoliosis exam to identify possible curvature of the spine. The screening is simple. The school nurse will ask your child to stand tall with his/her back to the screener and bend forward. Each child will be seen individually. Complete privacy will be provided. The chances of your child having scoliosis are small, but we have a responsibility to find those few cases. If there is a question with our findings, we will contact you promptly, otherwise you will not hear from us. Scoliosis screening will begin in January and continue until all 5th and 6th graders have been screened. If your child had a physical exam done in the past year, make sure a copy is on file in the Health Office. This would fulfill the NYS mandated screening requirement.

PARENT ADVICE

From TeacherVision

Organization: Advice for Parents

Developing good organizational skills is a key ingredient for success in school and in life. Although some people by nature are more organized than others, anyone can put routines and systems in place to help a child "get it together." Here's a list of strategies that you can use to help your child get -- and keep -- his life under control.

Use checklists. Help your child get into the habit of keeping a "to-do" list. Use checklists to post assignments, household chores, and reminders about what materials to bring to class. Your child should keep a small pad or notebook dedicated to listing homework assignments. Crossing completed items off the list will give him/her a sense of accomplishment.

Organize homework assignments. Before beginning a homework session, encourage your child to number assignments in the order in which they should be done. He/She should start with one that's not too long or difficult, but avoid saving the longest or hardest assignments for last.

Designate a study space. Your child should study in the same place every night. This doesn't have to be a bedroom, but it should be a quiet place with few distractions. All school supplies and materials should be nearby. If your young child wants to study with you nearby, too, you'll be better able to monitor his/her progress and encourage good study habits.

Set a designated study time. Your child should know that a certain time every day is reserved for studying and doing homework. The best time is usually not right after school -- most children benefit from time to unwind first. Include your child in making this decision. Even if he/she doesn't have homework, the reserved time should be used to review the day's lessons, read for pleasure, or work on an upcoming project.

Keep organized notebooks. Help your child keep track of papers by organizing them in a binder or notebook. This will help him/her review the material for each day's classes and to organize the material later to prepare for tests and quizzes. Use dividers to separate class notes, or color-code notebooks. Separate "to do" and "done" folders help organize worksheets, notices, and items to be signed by parents, as well as provide a central place to store completed assignments.

Conduct a weekly clean-up. Encourage your child to sort through book bags and notebooks on a weekly basis. Old tests and papers should be organized and kept in a separate file at home.

Create a household schedule. Try to establish and stick to a regular dinnertime and a regular bedtime. This will help your child fall into a pattern at home. Children with a regular bedtime go to school well rested. Try to limit television-watching and computer play to specific periods of time during the day.

Keep a master calendar. Keep a large, wall-sized calendar for the household that lists the family's commitments, schedules for extracurricular activities, days off from school, and major events at home and at school. Note dates when your child has big exams or due dates for projects. This will help family members keep track of each other's activities and avoid scheduling conflicts.

Prepare for the day ahead. Before your child goes to bed, he/she should pack schoolwork and books in a book bag. The next day's clothes should be laid out with shoes, socks, and accessories. This will cut down on morning confusion and allow your child to prepare quickly for the day ahead.

Provide needed support while your child is learning to become more organized. Help your child develop organizational skills by photocopying checklists and schedules and taping them to the refrigerator. Gently remind him/her about filling in calendar dates and keeping papers and materials organized. Most important, set a good example. *Adapted from "Tips for Developing Organizational Skills in Children" by the [Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities](#) (CCLD). Call 1-888-478-6463 for important resources and information about learning disabilities.*

