



July 3, 2009

Dear School Families,

Greetings for the summer from the school office! As July begins, we hope that you and your family are having a safe and fun summer. The summer months bring wonderful opportunities for children to develop new skills, explore interests and simply enjoy warm weather and fun with family and friends. It can also be a busy season. During the past few weeks, we have been continually busy at school, finishing work from the last school year, and looking ahead to next year.

During our staff development days teachers worked together on planning professional goals, curriculum goals, and reflecting on parent surveys. As we continue to experience growth in many areas of St. James, our theme, **“GROWING TOGETHER: FAITH, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS”**, reminds us that St. James’ greatest strength is comprised of the dedicated staff and families who together create a warm, welcoming environment committed to Christ and their children. With our commitment to our school, also comes our commitment to St. James Catholic Church. Just a reminder to families who have not

turned in their Forward in Faith pledge cards, to please do so as soon as possible.

In building on our theme for the upcoming school year, teachers have appreciated the feedback received from the parent surveys. As we believe “as good as we are, we can always get better”, our staff commits themselves to a level of excellence and values your assistance in the education of our children. We are thankful for our volunteers, helpers, and YOU who make a true difference in the impact we can make in creating the optimal learning environment. True success comes from the valued partnerships we have with our families.

The school environment is just one of the many components that we analyze and reflect upon consistently. At this time of the year, we note the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, which requires that we annually notify the staff and parents of our students that the Asbestos Management Plan is available in the school office for examination. Our school was not built with any asbestos containing materials. Our trained maintenance staff supervises materials brought into our school.



Teachers continue their study on brain research and developing their curriculum and

classroom environments. Many are involved with professional readings and workshops over the summer. Some topics include Reading instruction workshops, Religious Education and Catechetical Certification courses. In the first part of August, we combine with staff from St. Elizabeth and Co-Cathedral, as St. James hosts a two-day institute from Barbara Pedersen and her colleagues from Indianapolis, Indiana. Barbara and her team from C.L.A.S.S. (Connecting Learning Assures Successful Students) will share their expertise and provide professional development with regards to differentiation, literacy, behavior and collaboration. All strategies are based on the latest brain research. We are very excited about this wonderful professional development opportunity.

As many of you know, the money earned from the sale of uniforms, as well as our Teacher Cake and Pie auctions and Easter Candy sales directly benefits us, as these dollars fund our staff development; for example, our C.L.A.S.S. Institute. Our uniform store continues to expand and improve with the items we supply. These are the only uniforms we guarantee will meet our uniform code. Make your shopping easy and stop by on **August 6<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 PM—6:00 PM**. The uniform store will be open for purchasing uniforms, trying items on or placing a last minute order if necessary. We have ordered a large inventory, and suggest that you make arrangements to bring your child with you to try on items needed to start school.



We want to share some information about our 2009-2010 staff. We bid a fond farewell to Dara Dannen and Lisa Korte-Wilson. We know that they will always be a part of our school family, and we wish them God's blessings! We also recognize Alicia Brown and Stephanie Steffensmeier. Although they depart from their daily staff positions, Stephanie will remain on the school board by serving as the new Board President and Alicia will continue her position as Athletic Director. Cindy Compton will be working with Alicia as Assistant Athletic Director.

Changes within current staff occur as Cari Usera returns to the workroom. Peggy Jones will continue working Tuesdays and Thursdays in Preschool with Serena Irby and on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays she will join Pre-K with Lynn Kizzire. Andrea Peregrine will return to full time teaching in her 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom.

We are pleased to introduce our new staff members for the 2009-2010 school year. Vicki Fischer will serve as our new school secretary. She is excited to begin a journey of faith and fellowship with us. Vicki

and her husband Bob were welcomed as school parents this past year as their son Bobby attended Pre-K and will be returning for his second Pre-K year this fall. They found St. James to be a great place to begin making memories for Bobby, and she is thrilled to be a part of our St. James Staff. Vicki is looking forward to meeting all of you!

Amy Stark is our new First Grade teacher. Amy graduated from Park University with her Bachelors in Early Childhood Education and this will be her first year teaching. She and her family have been parishioners of St. James for 10 years. Amy is married with three children. Their oldest child attended St. James, and she is very excited to be a part of such a strong, established educational environment. Amy values the individuality of each child and what they can bring to the learning environment and that our faith in God will help provide a secure foundation on which to flourish as Christians and as a community of learners. *Welcome Vicki and Amy!*

All of St. James' Staff truly appreciates everything you do for us. As you know, our staff chooses to stay in the community we have developed at St. James because they feel it is their ministry. Our staff enjoys many aspects of our school due to the learning community we have established through the care our parish family, school board, PTO, parents, and students provide. You do your best to take care of us and we thank you!



We continue to grow in our use of technology, and are thankful to be utilizing the web and email to limit increasing postage costs. Teachers emailed class lists to families who attended St. James in the 2008-2009 school year. New families for the 2009-2010 school year will be added to our email list during July and class lists will be sent out.

Items to check over the summer include: **Your child's Class List**, **Supply Lists**, **Auction Update and Auction T-Shirt Form**, **PTO Newsletter and Information regarding Meet the Teacher Night and Back to School Ice Cream Social**, **a letter from the School Board**, and **important Café information, including the August Café calendar**. **You will also be able to access the School Calendar for 2009-2010.**

We are happy to provide you with an overview of critical dates, major events and days that we will be out of school. It is important to check the monthly calendar that is emailed via school newsletters throughout the school year, as it will be updated. If there are changes to times, programs, meetings, etc., the updated calendar emailed monthly, will override this overview calendar.



Please make plans to join us as we get the school building ready for another year of classes and meetings. Our School Board will sponsor the Annual Deep Cleaning event on **Sunday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, from 12:00 PM—3:00 PM**. Cleaning supplies will be provided, but feel free to bring your favorite dusting cloth with you. Students are welcome to come and clean, as they make great helpers and this is a time when they can become familiar with their new classroom. We ask that parents accompany them. This is a great way for middle school and high school students to earn service hours.



Be sure to mark your calendar for our **Meet-the-Teacher-Night and Back-to-School Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup>**. Feel free to come by anytime between 5:00PM—6:00PM for the opportunity to meet your homeroom teacher, drop off your school supplies, and tour the facilities. Beginning at 5:30 PM,

the PTO will host an ICE CREAM SOCIAL. It is a great time for sharing conversation with new and old friends. Be sure to check out the PTO news flyer for more information. If you are a current school family that is a buddy family, be sure to contact your new family before this date. For more information regarding buddy families, please contact Rachel Richardson at [rarich18@hotmail.com](mailto:rarich18@hotmail.com). If you are a new family and did not attend the new family meeting that was held in May, there will be a short Preschool—8<sup>th</sup> Grade **new family** meeting in the Social Hall at 6:50 PM.



We look forward to seeing our 1<sup>st</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> graders on their first day of school, Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, at our normal start time 7:50 AM. To help ease back into the routine, this will be a noon dismissal day. Please note that EXTENDED CARE will not be offered on the 18<sup>th</sup>, however it will be available beginning the 19<sup>th</sup>. The first day of school for Preschool, Pre-K and Kindergarten will be the 19<sup>th</sup>, which is a full day of school.

As much as our school is growing, we do have some availability Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. As you know, you are our best recruiters. Thank you for all you do to positively share the wonderful opportunities St. James has to offer.

Our office staff looks forward to continuing their service to the families of St. James. If there is anything we can do to be supportive of you please do not hesitate to contact one of us. Our offices will be reopen July 20<sup>th</sup>, however we will be checking voicemail.

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Have a Blessed Summer!

