



St. Stanislaus Kostka School

"They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love."

Mrs. Patricia Graham
Principal

www.sskschool.org
732-254-5819

February 20, 2014

Dear Parents,

Perhaps we are over all the snow for this year OR maybe Mother Nature is just taking a breather, but let us enjoy the milder weather for a time.

I have attached two letters concerning winter weather issues. One concerns answers to questions that some parents have raised about Distance Learning and the other concerns the school roof. Please be sure to read both thoroughly so that you are informed on these issues.

As we get closer to the final part of the school year, I ask you to consider volunteering to serve on the Executive Board of the HSA next year. We will be in need of new leadership as three of our officers will be leaving and the office of President, Vice President, and Treasurer will be open. In a few weeks I will be sending out notices asking you to nominate parents whom you feel should be considered for those positions. You may also nominate yourselves. Please also read the attached notice in this mailing on volunteering for other positions which need to be filled.

Congratulations are in order for some of our students here at St. Stan's. The third and fourth grade girls' basketball team won 1st place in the St. Bart's tournament last weekend and Madison St. Rose was chosen as MVP. Great job, girls!

In addition, the following students received the top 4 places in the Knights of Columbus Substance Abuse Poster Contest, Caitlyn Hochron, Amanda Dembowski, Nawal Panjwani, and Jessica Kerekes. Congratulations!

A reminder that Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, March 5, with a school mass at 9:00 AM at which time ashes will be distributed. Please join us.

Terra Nova testing will be held the week of March 10th. Please be sure that your children eat a good breakfast and get plenty of sleep in preparation for the testing. Do not schedule any outside appointments or vacations at that time as students may make up tests only if they are out sick on days of the testing.

Enjoy the warm weather... it may not last long!

Regards,
Mrs. Patricia Graham
Principal

February 20, 2014

Dear Parents,

These are questions which I received from parents concerning Distance Learning. I have polled the teachers for their answers and compiled these for you to better understand how Distance Learning works. I do hope this is of help to you. Please see the article in February 14th edition of the Star Ledger concerning the trend toward Distance Learning in other school -

http://www.nj.com/education/2014/02/with_more_snow_coming_schools_offer_virtual_classes_to_keep_lessons_on_track.html

Regards,

Mrs. Patricia Graham

Principal

Distance Learning Questions/Concerns

- 1) What are the expectations/requirements regarding workload? Is there a minimum number of total hours? Is it a certain amount of minutes per subject? **It is expected that students will do about 3-4 hours of schoolwork as if it were a half day of school.**
- 2) What happens if it falls on half day? Are workload requirements decreased as well? **It it falls on a half day of school the work load would remain the same.**
- 3) What happens if child was sick day before and doesn't have resources home? **As on a normal day of school the child would have an extra day to make up the work. Students would discuss this with their teachers.**
- 4) Should all assignments be accessible online or are kids expected to bring home all books day before? **If there is advanced warning of a possible snow day, teachers usually have students take home needed books or worksheets. If unexpected, the assignments should be scanned in or internet based. In some subjects, the assignment may be a reading and written one.**

- 5) Should group assignments be given? 8th grade got one Monday and is due Sunday. So far we've had 2 snow days & 1 delayed opening ...when will the groups actually do some of this work in school? **Group assignments are rarely given and only when it is possible for students to communicate through phone or email with each other. Students were provided email addresses and access to Google Docs that allow them to collaborate online. Students are able to IM and text their friends, therefore it is believed that they should be able to collaborate online as 20th century learners. Most teachers did not give group assignments.**
- 6) If a special doesn't normally give homework, then should Distance Learning for that special still occur? A parent noticed a few grades that had Music homework. **A music assignment was given to only the classes that would have had a music period that day and work assigned was much less than what would have been done in a regular music class.**
- 7) Are the Distance Learning assignments graded and posted on PowerSchool? How are they accounted for? **In most cases assignments are corrected but not posted in Power School as a grade. It is counted as school work in some classes and homework in others depending on the assignment and may be posted accordingly in Power School**
- 8) In some situations, some parents do not have access to WiFi, how are those issues addressed? Is this asked in beginning of school year who has printers, computers, internet? **At the beginning of the year parents are asked if access to internet and a printer is available. If the student does not have a printer they may do the work on regular paper. In very rare cases, if internet is not available, the parent may speak to the teacher and other arrangements can be made. Further discussion will be held on this subject.**
- 9) Are snow days built into the calendar? Does Distance Learning have to be used the very first day we have a snow day off or is there the opportunity to build a couple snow days in and then use Distance Learning after a couple days have been used? **St Stan's has not built snow days into the calendar for a few years because of the Christmas, Winter and Easter vacations as well as the earlier end- of -school dismissal due to the carnival. This has never been an issue before as we have never had such a snowy winter. If this calendar were to change in the future, then these vacations will have to be significantly reduced. According to a recent news article, (see p.11 of the**

Union County section of the Star Ledger, Friday, Feb. 14th issue) distance learning in many schools is beginning to become a virtual reality on snow days.

- 10) Many parents have concerns with getting all the work done when they are dual working households and don't have a person to help the kids do this during the day while they are at work. Proves to be a heavy challenge with completing all the work once parents get home. Primary teachers state that the work assigned is lessened and should be able to be done independently. They further feel that the caregiver should be able to assist any of the child's needs and that the teachers check emails frequently during the day if questions arise. In the upper grades the work should be able to be completed independently. If the child waits until the working parent gets home from work to complete the work, it would certainly be a burden on that parent. However, it was generally felt that students should be able to complete the work by themselves with little adult aid.**
- 11) Is homework for the day built into the Distance Learning work hours? Distance learning may consist of assigned classwork and homework but most teachers do not assign homework on distance learning days.**
- 12) Some parents have concerns that their kids have been spending longer than school hours getting the work done, more prevalent in middle school. Middle school teachers all believe that if the students stay focused and not take continued breaks, they should be able to get their work done in 4 hours. They have surveyed their students and the majority of students felt that if they worked at the pace they would work in school, they would not be spending any more than that amount of time. The only time a complaint was heard was for one assignment which the class had in language arts for over a week and some procrastinated on it. They were asked for it to be completed by the snow day. It must also be taken into consideration that some students take longer time to complete assignments than others do.**

Dear Parents,

This letter is in response to some questions from parents concerning the safety of our school roof and the various leaks that have sprung up around the school. First, please know that the children's safety is always of the utmost importance at St. Stan's.

I was made aware over the past few weeks of smaller leaks in the cafeteria and gym and advised both our maintenance man and Fr. Ken of this at that time. I was told that we had to wait until the roof dried out to address how to care for these leaks. However, due to the terrible weather conditions lately, there have been many more leaks popping up.

A team of engineers has been at the school yesterday inspecting the roof and its structure and they have assured our maintenance man that since the roof and structure below is older and well built, as opposed to some of the newer structures which have been in the news recently, ours is structurally sound. That being said, the team is continuing to study the problem and will be reporting back to us with their full report as soon as possible with potential solutions.

I am also aware that there have been additional leaks in the cafeteria and gym and some tiles in the upper level classrooms have received water. We have made adjustments in the seating of the children in all these areas so that children are not getting wet, nor are there any tiles which have come down from the ceilings. Tables have either been cleaned before the children are eating, or if the leak has continued, the children are not sitting at those tables.

For now, we are making whatever adjustments needed until the final report and solution has been given to us. Once again, may I reiterate that we have been assured that the structure of the roof is sound and that the children are safe. I hope that this allays your concerns. As soon as I receive the final report, I will communicate this to parents.

Best regards,

Mrs. Patricia Graham
Principal

Dear Parents,

There are various opportunities to volunteer at St. Stan's. We have the following positions where volunteers are needed: hospitality, advertising, fundraising, bingo captain, bingo caller, voucher committee, and emergency bingo list.

Volunteering is a lot of fun and has a lot of benefits. While volunteering you will have the opportunity to network with other parents and learn so much about the other grades and their experiences. Volunteering is always fun to do with a buddy and time really does fly by. When we do things in groups we wind up joking, laughing and before we know it, the task is done!

When there are a lot of volunteers, each task will seem minimal. The more people, the less hours that are needed from one person.

One of the things we love about St. Stan's is that we are a community whose members help one another. It is very important that we respect one another's time and effort. We do ask if you volunteer to please respect the other volunteers and make sure to show up for your scheduled shift. When you do not show up it becomes unpleasant for the other parents.

A person who volunteers is a person who voluntarily offers him or herself for a service or undertaking. Unfortunately we are not able to trade work bond requirements for all the volunteers' services that are needed. Our work bond is down to a bare minimum.

We realize that everyone has different schedules but each can help out in different ways. Please take some time to look at the enclosed handout and the descriptions of the areas in which we need help. If you are interested in helping in any of these areas please contact me or any member of the HSA.

Thanks so much!

Jennifer Zappola
HSA Treasurer

Volunteer Positions

~**Hospitality** – Helping with serving breakfast or desserts for special occasions. For example: the Benefactor's breakfast, serving cakes for graduation

~**Advertising Committee** – Helping with advertising special events taking place at the school. For example: Putting ads in the local newspapers or the Church bulletin.

~**Fundraising Committee**– Working towards running and creating various fundraisers to help raise money for the school. For example: Yankee candle, magazines, Gertrude Hawk candy, percentage of store/restaurant sales on specific days.

~**Voucher Committee** – A group of eight people on a rotating schedule to sell vouchers before and after mass. This would be each member of the committee selling vouchers once every other month.

~**Bingo Captain** – Each group is a team of two people. Your main responsibility would be collecting and distributing money during bingo. Thursday and Sunday bingos are both looking for volunteers. This would count as your Bingo and Cafeteria obligation towards your work bond.

~**Bingo Caller** – You would be calling out the bingo numbers during games. Currently, we need each volunteer once per month for a Thursday or Sunday Bingo shift. The more volunteers we get then we can spread it out to once every other month.

~ **Emergency Bingo List**- Being on this list, you would be contacted if the regular scheduled person calls out or somebody does not show up for their shift. For each time you cover an extra bingo shift it would count towards one "other" off your work bond.

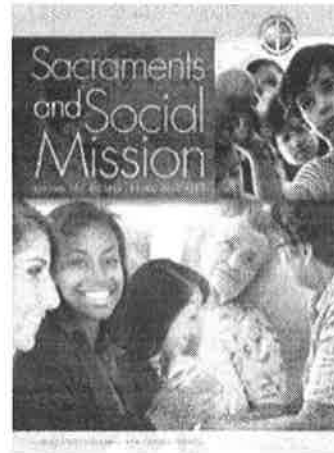
2014 Lenten Adult Faith Enrichment Series
Our Lady of Victories Church, Sayreville

This Lent, join us as we study and reflect on the
"Sacraments and Social Mission"
a recent publication of the USCCB.

Sessions will be held Mondays
March 24, 31 and April 7

We will gather for each session in the
Lower Church at 7:30 PM.

For more information, talk with
Fr. Ryan (732)-257-0077 or tryan@olvsayrenj.com



The sacraments the Church celebrates are signs of grace that make a deeper reality present to us. One reality we encounter through the sacraments is Christ's presence in the Church community, his body. This recognition of Christ's presence in the community should lead to a stronger awareness of being sent on mission to engage in concrete, love-inspired action in the world.

2014 Lenten Adult Faith Enrichment Series Registration

"Sacraments and Social Mission"

Mondays: March 24, 31 and April 7 @ 7:30 PM

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- _____ I would like to attend the sessions
_____ I would like to participate via Internet study
_____ I am unable to attend but would like to order materials for home study

Resources are available for download at:

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments/sacraments-and-social-mission.cfm>

If you would like to order a copy of the text for \$7 check here

(Please place in collection basket or return to the Parish Office)
Our Lady of Victories Church
42 Main Street Sayreville, NJ 08872