



St. Angela Merici Parish School Family Monthly Newsletter

August 24, 2008

20830 Lorain Road, Fairview Park, Ohio 44126 - Phone: 440-333-2126 - www.samparish.org/school_index.html

Contents with this Family Mail

One per student:

1. Emergency Medical Form
2. Type equation here. Photo Release Form
3. Legal Custody Form

One per family:

1. Student-Parent Handbook 2008-09
2. Handbook Acceptance Form
3. Arrival and Dismissal Map
4. School Room Map
5. Cafeteria Procedures
6. Children's Choir Information
7. Extended Care Information

Please return all forms to the school office in your Family Mail Packet by the first day of school.

Did you know . . .

St. Angela educators participated in over 1,300 hours of professional development this summer!

Dear St. Angela School Families,

Welcome to the 2008-09 school year! It is my hope and prayer that you and your child are as excited as I am to begin this school year.

With our school's theme of "Christ Lives in Me", we are reminded of our baptismal call to live a grace-filled life in which love and service to others is our living witness to Christ's love for us. Your sacrifices to support your child's faith formation through Catholic education are a strong witness of His Love. Our faculty's hard work and dedication, along with their personal sacrifices, are a strong witness to their faith and commitment to Catholic education. Working together in partnership so that our students can grow in faith, mind and body is, too, a strong witness to a life in Christ.

This year should be an exciting one with the beginnings of our Self-Study (See page 4 for the article.) and the combining of experience and knowledge of a new leadership team. Throughout the summer, Mrs. Neubauer and I have worked together, and my appreciation for Mrs. Neubauer's experience has grown.

In order to provide clarity for students, parents and staff, the following lists the division of duties for our new leadership team:

Catechesis, curriculum, instruction and teaching, educator standards, standards, personnel, mission and visioning, strategic planning, culture and climate, discipline (severe or repeated), community relations, exceptional students, staff development and training, and other leadership activities

Mrs. Urban

School calendar and events, liturgy and retreat planning, discipline (initial office referrals), Peer Mediation, volunteers, school schedules, bus transportation, non-instructional staff, maintenance and safety issues, and other operations activities

Mrs. Neubauer

May God bless all members of our school community as we journey together to witness to the world that "Christ Lives in Me"!

In Christ,

Mrs. Denise Modic Urban, M.A.Ed.
Principal
MrsUrban@SAMParish.org

Building Bridges for Success: **Promoting School and Home Communication**

Providing parents with communication tools to build a bridge between home and school is a priority at St. Angela Merici School. A strong partnership with parents and staff is essential for a successful school experience for each child.

Communication tools include:

Family Mail – Each family received their first Family Mail on Welcome Back Day and will receive Family Mail each Friday through their youngest or only child. The Family Mail envelopes are to be returned each Monday so that the envelopes can be emptied and reloaded. Here are a few reminders for a successful Family Mail program:

- *Family Mail is intended for items of interest to the entire school community not specific individuals. All Family Mail inserts must be reviewed and approved by the principal and **must be submitted no later than noon on Monday before the Friday it is to be inserted.***
- *Only items for the school office should be returned in your Family Mail envelope. Items for specific teachers should be given to the teacher not Family Mail. Also, Campbell Soup labels should be returned to your child's homeroom teacher not Family Mail.*
- *Please do not decorate the envelope or cover the labels on the envelope except for clear contact paper.*
- *If you lose your Family Mail envelope, contact the school office. Please note that there is a \$3 replacement charge.*

A special thanks to our Parent-Teacher Connection (PTC) volunteers who coordinate the loading and unloading of the Family Mail weekly!

Progress Reports and Report Cards – St. Angela Merici School provides Progress Reports for each student through the internet Edline Program. At the end of each quarter, each student receives a paper Report Card informing parents and students progress for the quarter.

Edline – This internet-based program provides parents with information about grades, assignments, and other tools in a password protected online environment. See the article to the right for more information

Conferences – Formal conferences are scheduled twice a year. In addition, conference appointments may be scheduled by either parents or teachers as needed throughout the school year. It is important to schedule conference appointments rather than impromptu conferences so that the teacher can give you his or her full attention during the conference.

Email – Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teachers through email since each teacher has a St. Angela Merici email account. Each teacher's email account is linked to their Edline home page.

Weekly Principal Update Emails – On Fridays, parents will receive a Weekly Principal Update Email. To receive this email, make sure you have an email account active with your Edline account.

NEW! Monthly Family Newsletters – Watch your Family Mail for the monthly family newsletter.

Have you activated your Edline parent account for all of your children yet? If not, please take a few moments to do so since Edline is an important home-school communication tool.

Benefits of Edline include:

- *Access your child's grades online 24-7 through our paper-free Progress Reports.*
- *Receive weekly emails from the principal.*
- *Receive emails from your child's teachers.*
- *Check your child's homework assignments.*
- *Access important school forms.*
- *Check the school calendar for important events and dates.*

Make sure to link an email address to your Edline account so that you will receive important emails from the school. Please know that your email addresses are not published and can only be accessed by school staff who directly work with your child.

Coming soon . . .

The new St. Angela Merici Parish School website is under construction!

Focus on Faculty:

Teachers prepare for the school year with prayer, planning and professional development

With summer coming quickly to a close, the staff at St. Angela Merici School has been working diligently in planning for a great school year. With teachers setting up their classrooms, maintenance completing the finishing touches of our annual summer “face lift” of the school building, and the office and support staff organizing the details for launch of a new school year, the 2008-09 school year is ready to begin with a great start.

This year, our faculty participated in a week-long in-service including prayer and faith formation activities, planning meetings, and professional development sessions in order to prepare for the upcoming year. The teachers participated in the following training topics:

- *Cracking the Code on Testing Data*
- *Simplifying Simple Solutions*
- *Discussions About Literacy*
- *Charting the Course for Student Learning: Using Atlas Rubicon for Instructional Planning*
- *Bits and Bytes: Various Technology Topics*
- *Training and Consensus Building: New Educator Standards and Evaluation*
- *Setting Sail on the OCSAA Self Study Journey*

Our spiritual retreat day was on Friday, entitled “Christ Lives in Me”, included Margaret Lyons, who is the Secretariat for Education/Superintendent for the Diocese of Cleveland, as our keynote speaker.

Welcome to our new teachers!

Miss Caroline Gallagher joins our early childhood teaching team as our newest Kindergarten teacher. Miss Gallagher, a native of the Cleveland area, spent four years teaching in Florida and has decided to return home to be closer to her family. In addition to four years of successful early childhood teaching experience, Miss Gallagher is a graduate from Ashland University with a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education. Miss Gallagher's enthusiasm, dedication to students and the teaching profession in addition to her expertise in early literacy are skills that will harmonize with Miss Barry on the Kindergarten team.

Miss Kristen Holy will join our teaching team as our second middle childhood mathematics specialist for grades 5 through 8. As a graduate from John Carroll University, Miss Holy is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education in Middle Childhood Education (4 – 9) in Mathematics and Language Arts with a Reading Endorsement (K -12) and has one year full-time teaching experience at St. Robert Bellarmine in Euclid. We are pleased that Miss Holy is joining our middle childhood team with her successful teaching experience in grades 7 and 8 math and her knowledge and application of current best practices in math education.

Mrs. Cindy McElheny will join our early childhood team as the long-term substitute for Mrs. Sarah Bobko's maternity leave. Mrs. McElheny is a graduate from Ashland University with a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and has a year of 1st grade teaching experience at St. Vincent de Paul in Elyria. Mrs. McElheny's enthusiasm, warmth and compassion, and knowledge of best practices in early childhood should give parents the assurance that our first graders will receive a wonderful learning experience throughout this school year.

Congratulations to . . .

Mrs. Patti Horner (grade 2) was selected to serve on the Diocese of Cleveland's Science Curriculum Committee this summer. Mrs. Horner and the other committee members worked for two weeks in June to revise the graded course of study for science. The new science curriculum is scheduled for implementation for the 2009-10 school year.

Miss Lindsey Pfahl (grade 3) completed her Masters in Education (M.Ed.) from Ashland University in Curriculum and Instruction: Literacy.

Congratulations to both Mrs. Horner and Miss Pfahl!

School News and Updates

OCSAA Self Study Begins

As part of our accreditation with the Ohio Catholic Schools Accrediting Association (OCSAA), St. Angela School will begin the two-year Self Study Process. The self study gives us an opportunity to review all aspects of our school to evaluate our current programs, review and revise our mission and vision, and create a new school improvement plan which will guide our school for the next five years.

Gathering and analyzing data and information is the one of the first tasks that the self study addresses. In September, we will be surveying parents, students, staff, parishioners and alumni to gather information about our school. We will keep you posted on our progress throughout the process through Edline emails, Family Mail and Newsletters.

Upcoming School Events

- 8/26/08 ~ First Day of School
- 8/28/08 ~ Kindergarten Visitation Day
- 8/29/08 ~ First Day of Kindergarten
- 9/01/08 ~ Labor Day, No School
- 9/03/08 ~ First Day of Hot Lunches
- 9/08/08 at 1:15 pm ~ All School Mass
- 9/09/08 at 7 pm ~ Parent Band Information Meeting
- 9/10/08 at 7 pm ~ Curriculum Night (Parent Open House)
- 9/11/08 at 6 pm Virtus Training
- 9/15/08 at 8:30 am ~ Grades 3 & 5 Class Mass
- 9/17/08 at 8:30 am ~ Grades 2 & 8 Class Mass
- 9/18/08 QSP Magazine Kick Off
- 9/21/08 ~ Catechetical Sunday
- 9/23/08 at 8:30 am ~ Grades 4 & 6 Class Mass
- 9/23/08 Picture Day (appropriate dress up for students) *Photo Consent Form must be submitted in order for students to participate in school pictures.*
- 9/26/08 at 8:30 am ~ Grades 1 & 7 Class Mass
- 9/29/08 at 1:15 pm All School Mass (Blue Mass)

Please check the Edline School Calendar for current dates and times for school events.

School Summer Maintenance Projects

Safety is a priority at St. Angela Merici School. In order to keep our school safe and clean, our school building received a "facelift" this summer as part of the summer maintenance program. The parish invested over \$40,00 in this necessary maintenance projects which included:

- Gym floor rescreening
- HVAC repairs and air duct cleaning
- Carpet replacement in room 312
- Painting and staining
- Repairs and maintenance

As you can see, maintenance and repairs is a costly, but necessary, expense to the parish and school. A special thanks goes out to Mrs. Eva Ungureau and her staff for their hard work this summer.

Arrival and Dismissal – New Procedures

Over the summer, the arrival and dismissal plan was reviewed and revised for student safety and efficiency. The revised arrival and dismissal maps are included in this Family Mail. Please review this carefully to ensure a safe and hassle-free arrival and dismissal for students. Overall, the procedures are the same except for:

- Fairview Park now busses students grades 1 – 6 within a one mile radius and permits students over 1 mile to ride a bus based on seat availability. Contact Fairview Park transportation for more details.
 - Supervision begins at 7:30 am. **NEW!** - Rather than waiting in the cafeteria until the attendance bell, students will report immediately to their homerooms upon arrival to unpack, organize for the day, and begin their morning bellwork. School begins at 7:45 am.
 - All morning car rider vehicles will enter via Westwood, pull-up in circle at the Rini Center entrance to drop off students without parking, and immediately exit via Westwood. For the safety of students, no cars will exit via the west side of the school building.
 - **NEW!** - Bus riders will be dismissed at 2:30 pm, and their busses are scheduled to leave St. Angela's at 2:35 pm. Car riders will be dismissed immediately following the bus departure and are scheduled to depart by 2:40 pm. Walkers and bikers will be dismissed and escorted to the edge of the school property once all busses and cars have departed.
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