

November 9, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope that you are enjoying the crisp fall mornings as you make your way to St. Stephen's School. We have already been in school more than forty days, believe it or not, and there are forty-seven shopping days until Christmas. With the tough economic times facing so many of us it might be difficult for some of you to provide Christmas for your family. If you could use some assistance with gifts contact me with your needs and we will place them on the parish giving tree.

There are several things that I would like to remind you of:

- Students must be in full regular winter uniform. Hair needs to be the proper length. Boys need to wear belts. Uniform violation demerits will be given out to any student not in compliance.
- We are collecting for the South Jersey Food Bank during the month of November. Please be as generous as you can.
- Too many students are coming in late every day. It is quite disruptive to the teachers and students when someone enters the class late. *A student who comes to school after 8:05 A.M. is considered late. The students cannot drive themselves to school so it is your responsibility to get started earlier. Students will receive a demerit for being late to school. After 3 demerits the student receives a morning detention. The detention must be served from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM on the assigned Wednesday. Failure to serve a detention is not an acceptable option. Keep in mind that you may call if you are running late; however the call must be received in the office by 7:50 AM.*
- If a parent needs to speak with a teacher, please, call and make an appointment. You may not just drop by in the morning. Our teachers are quite busy preparing for the start of the day and can't give your problem or concern proper attention without some time to prepare.
- The front door is the *only* door that may be used by visitors entering the school. *There are no exceptions.*
- Visitors to the building *must* stop in the Office and receive an I.D. tag.
- You must wear a nametag as long as you are in the building.
- **Parents are not permitted to park in handicap parking spots at any time unless they have a handicapped license or decal.**
- Parents are not permitted to park in front of school to drop off their children. Park your car, walk them to the door, and say good-bye.

There is no need, at this point in time, for parents to be entering the school with their children. This becomes upsetting to all involved.

- Students are encouraged to wear something RED, WHITE, and BLUE on Friday for our Veteran's Day Celebration. Students who dress down are asked to make a \$1 donation to offset the cost of a new flag for the school.
- Wednesday, November 9, is the end of the marking period. Report cards will be handed out on November 10 at the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Remember conferences are for grade K-8 parents only. Please be on time for your scheduled appointment.
- Please keep in mind that students in the accelerated programs of Math and Language Arts must maintain an average of 85 or greater. Those students who do not meet that requirement will be returned to the regular classes beginning on Monday, November 14.
- Students who have 2 Ds or 1 F or any combination will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities such as Student Council or basketball. If their grades have improved after two weeks they can be reinstated.

An OSA Pep rally will be held on December 1 in Trenton, NJ at the Statehouse. Buses will be provided to take interested parents and students to the rally on behalf of the Opportunity Scholarship Act. The Diocesan representatives in Trenton believe that this is the right time to make a gigantic push to get this bill that will provide vouchers for students who attend non-public schools passed. Contact the office if you would like to attend. There will be no charge to you.

Finally, school will be in session on December 8. This is a holy day of obligation, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and the children will go to Mass. I know that we were scheduled to be off from school. However, with the forecast of a snowy winter I want to stockpile some snow days. At present, we only have 2 built into the calendar. Once the allocated days have been used we would have to extend the school year. Any days not used will be taken off of the calendar at the end of the year.

Sincerely,

Patricia Higgins, MA.Ed
Principal