

Walk with Jesus, our living hope!

Dear Parents,

Meet the Teacher (Virtually) Night...We are pleased to provide you with the opportunity to learn more about your child's program this year. In keeping with COVID-19 safety protocols, this experience will take the form of a pre-recorded presentation prepared by the teacher for your viewing, starting at 7:00 on Thursday, September 17. Any questions about the presentation may be directed to the teacher using email. Note that teachers will not be addressing questions/comments about the Option 4 Transition to School program. They are very eager to share details about all the interesting things your children will be learning about over the course of the year. You will also have the chance to meet our new Learning Commons teacher, Mr. Anthony Small, who will make his presentation available to you as well. (This year, our AGM meeting will take place the following Thursday, virtually. Stay tuned for details.)

Option 4 Students Update...Students who are learning via this option can expect to receive a learning package from the classroom teacher of the class they would be in if they were present in the building. This package is to be picked up on Friday, September 18 from tables that will be set out at the back of the school near the back door. These must be returned, with assignments completed, the following Friday.

Classroom teachers will let you know the time on Monday when they will meet virtually with these students for 30 minutes for the first time, as well as when their 30 minute follow up meeting will occur later in the week. We are trying to be mindful of ensuring that each grade's meetings take place at a variety of times. We will follow this plan of Friday pickup/drop-off until your children return to school either in October or November.

*Thank you to the parents of the 11 students who gave us a week's notice that their children are coming to school in person starting on September 21. *Any parent wishing to switch from Option 4 to Option 1 needs to let us know a week in advance please.*

PEC Update...We are pleased to welcome to our Parish Education Committee a new member: Ms Rossa Sung, parent of two students in our school. Ms Sung is a treasure trove of energy and ideas and we are grateful that she is willing to engage at the PEC level on behalf of the CISVA Board of Directors, along with our other hard working members. We will update you as to the positions of each PEC member after our October meeting.

Classroom Communicator Update...How blessed are we to have such a fine group of parents who are willing to sacrifice their time to act in the role of Classroom Communicators this year. Led by the wonderful Mrs. Fiona Dwan, this year's group includes:

Grade 7 : Teresa Dolmat

Grade 6A: Paula Scott

Grade 6B: Tanya Dimawala
Grade 5: Shereen Pang
Grade 4: Kathy Armstrong
Grade 3: Glenna Cabalfin
Grade 2: Fiona Dwan
Grade 1: Sonya Szpyra
Kindergarten: TBA

*Thank you so much to Mrs. Kathy Armstrong for her previous leadership in coordinating the coordinators last year. We so appreciate the time and energy you put into improving our school communications.

Air Quality Concerns

Local Health Authorities have been providing some direction to schools and the general theme of these communications are:

- With the current air quality we discourage vigorous activities like planned PE classes outdoors
- Recommend keeping windows closed while air quality is poor
- Students can still go outside during recess and lunch if they can tolerate it
- Be aware students with asthma may feel the poor air quality more than others

At SFDS School, we are following all the recommendations as described. We are blessed to also have air purifiers in our classrooms. We are asking students to wear their masks outside.

Early Dismissal Date Reminder...We have received feedback that parents may think these take place every Wednesday, when in fact they take place only on the last Wednesday of the month and will be noted on our school calendar which you may find on our website. www.sfdsschool.ca Our first such dismissal takes place on Wednesday, September 30.

Picture Day....Our trusted partners, **Photo Express**, will be visiting our school on Tuesday, Oct. 13 to take individual photos of all our staff and students. They have a 10 page safety protocol that they follow, so we can ensure that the students will be safe during this process.

“Our exclusive program represents the best practices in safety during photography operations as prescribed by the *Volume Imaging Professionals Association*, an international advisory group serving our industry. Here’s what to expect from us:

- NO-TOUCH photography protocol with proper social distancing.
- NO printed forms to pass out. Parent contact handled by email.
- NO hassle photo order process. Parents order online or by phone.
- NO physical collection of money or forms will be done on picture day.
- NO-TOUCH Class Composite Photos and School Composite Photos.

- OPTIONS to have print packages mailed direct to home, or picked up at our local Office.”

Please note that:

3 to 5 Days *after* Photo Day: Parents will receive an email with their children’s access codes. This will allow you to place your specific orders.

Supporting our Students’ Learning....: In keeping with our agreed upon shared core values of LEARN, ACHIEVE and ENGAGE, our students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are beginning a new program called **Brain 1st**. It is made up of a series of short, fun, 3D animated videos that will be played every day to help students regulate emotion, increase focus and learning, improve coordination, calm the mind and body, and increase levels of physical activity; all of which are highly critical skills for success both in and out of the classroom.

The content provided in this program is supported by several studies that demonstrate the improvements in academic performance, behaviors, physical development, and overall well-being. Each day, students will participate in a 5-12 minute class delivered online in the classroom. The sessions will take place during regular classroom hours and align with our curriculum so no learning is lost. The sessions focus on areas of the curriculum including social-emotional learning, career, physical education, and health.

We are so excited to be participating in a program with content that has proven outcomes across a wide spectrum of applications in the life of your child. The *Brain 1st* program contains practices that are linked to improved cognitive and physical function as well as decreases in stress and anxiety.

To learn more about this program from *Brain 1st*, visit their website at www.brain1st.ca.

*Please read the provided information in the downloads to learn more about the connection between primitive reflexes and your child’s development, as well as how an understanding of functional neurology impacts learning.

FAITH is one of our core values..., along with LEARN, ENGAGE, MERCY and SERVE. In keeping with our values, students will be taking part in a program called:

VIRTUES IN PRACTICE

“The Catholic school’s task is fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life: the first is reached by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught, in the light of the Gospel; the second is the growth of the virtues characteristic of the Christian.” (Congregation for Catholic Education, The Catholic School 37)

Virtues in Practice is a program for children in grades pre-kindergarten through eight to grow closer to Jesus by imitating His life and virtues. It is set up in such a way that a whole school studies the same virtue each month, to provide a whole-school (and at home, whole-family) focus. The program covers 27 virtues over a three-year cycle, with 81 saints held up as models of the virtues.

This month, we are focusing on the virtue of **HOPE**. What is hope, but: **TRUST in God's loving plan for our lives!**

Kindergarten, Grade One and Grade Two will learn more **about St. Joseph.**

Grades 3, 4, and 5 will learn about **St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.**

Grades 6 and 7 will learn about **Blesseds Louis and Zelig Martin.**

How can parents help? Talk to your child about times when, like the saints, you faced a situation that you thought was insurmountable, and yet God supported you and didn't let you down. Talk about times when you didn't know what to do, and you said: *THY* will be done, just like the saints did, and things worked out better than you could have planned. Learn about these saints with your children. **Saints are people who HOPED! They trusted in God's loving plan!** Pray an Act of Hope every night as a family. For more information, feel free to visit: <https://www.aquinascollege.edu/centers/center-for-evangelization-and-catechesis/virtues-in-practice/>

Following the principle of subsidiarity...It has come to our attention that parents may be unfamiliar with this practice that all our CISVA school communities follow.

Subsidiarity is an organizing principle that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority. The word subsidiarity is derived from the Latin word *subsidiarius* and has its origins in Catholic social teaching.

Basically, if a parent has an issue that requires a resolution it is best to meet with the classroom teacher *first*. If it cannot be resolved between the two of you, it should be brought to the attention of the school principal. If it *still* cannot be resolved, it is brought to the attention of the Parish Education Committee. If it *still* cannot be resolved, it goes before the Board of Directors.

It is the nature of a community to encounter issues from time to time. Please follow the above practice to find necessary resolutions. It is in the best interests of all of us at SFDS School and Parish.

Irene Wihak, Principal