

Dear Cathedral School Families,

I am excited and honored to begin the new school year at Cathedral Grade School. I have been fortunate to have the time in July to sit down with each staff member for a lengthy time to share ideas, concerns, suggestions and the skills of each person. I learned a great deal and feel that I have become quite familiar with this wonderful staff.

Our staff has been having technology classes on each Wednesday during July to learn about new programs and peripherals for the white boards. We are all quite energized about the new technologies that we will share with our students. One of the ideas we will use this year is having "Parent Tech Nights", where the students and teachers can teach our parents about the amazing resources we have at CGS and to allow them time to play and learn. I am truly impressed with the level of technology resources we have here and will work with the whole staff to make maximum use of all of these.

Students will start back to school on Wednesday, Aug. 19th, with dismissal that day at 11:00. The teachers will start the school year with formal meetings on Monday, Aug. 17th. Many of the staff are already at school, working to prepare their classrooms.

We welcome four new teachers to the staff this year. Mrs. Amanda Niedbalski will teach 3rd grade and Ms. Susan Ratkewicz will teach 4th grade. We will also have Mr. Dave Sebescak as our band instructor (he is retiring from Althoff and still works with their Jazz Band and brings a wealth of band and music experience). We will have Mr. Michael Towle, who serves as a parish minister for a variety of programs, as our full-time religion teacher for grades 5-8. He brings a rich background of religion experience. They all seem to be super assets to add to an already stellar group.

I feel very blessed to have such fine help in the office. Ms. Sandra is devoted to the families and students here. Ms. Linda Van Loo and I go way back to St. Augustine's and I know that her organizational skills and technology expertise is second-to-none in our local schools. I believe that we will be an awesome team!

Our other part-time persons will return for various activities. These include Mrs. Freuler for classroom music, Mrs. DeGroot for P.E., and Mrs. Kosco for Atrium.

ELC will be held by Laura Oughton and Mrs. Patty Birner will continue with PreK, with the hope that we will increase our enrollment enough to bring Mrs. Gail Fietsam back for Prek and library work.

The dress code has changed to drop P.E. clothing. Students will not be changing for P.E. any longer. The rest of the dress code remains intact from last year.

Our monthly faculty meetings will be held on the first Wednesdays with dismissal at 1:45. I am also planning to meet with the entire staff every Wednesday at 3:05 to touch base on any pending local issues. These will only last 15 minutes or so. I also expect that all teachers will remain in the building until 3:30 each day so that parents can use this time for visits or conferences.

I feel very strongly about everyone using the proper "chain of command" when questions arise from parents regarding a classroom event. I will insist that parents begin with a discussion with the teacher involved before they call me. If the conference with the teacher doesn't resolve the issue, the next step will be for all parties to meet with me. Then, and only then, after the parents teachers and I cannot resolve the issue, will we involve Fr. Myler. Please do not begin there, because I am going to encourage Father to ask "Have you spoken with the teacher?" It has been my experience that when parents and teachers share their concerns/ questions, most issues can be easily resolved. I hope that we can all dedicate ourselves to this very simple process.

As you probably know, our lunch program this coming year will be sponsored through District #118. This will be a great thing, since the prices will be lower, there will be more options and the program will be more flexible for older students who may want extra food. The cost for lunch will be \$2.25 for one complete Class A lunch. Since we won't be making/cooking lunches in our own kitchen, we will be combining classes into two lunch periods (instead of three) to keep the food warmer for serving.

The supervision before school will now begin at 6:45, since there was no real need last year for the earlier fifteen minutes. No students will be allowed in the building until 6:45 a.m. It is important that we provide assistance to parents who need to be at work early.

I know there are probably more issues to cover as we start up this school year. Dates for the Parent Orientation have still not been set and will be posted soon on

the website. Please try to check for new articles and activities often as we begin our new school year.

Dr. Kay Bennett, Principal