

May 18, 2020

Dear St. Catharine Families,

Thank you for your continued support and endurance during this time away from the traditional school building education! In my visits to Zoom meetings, there seems to be great participation by our students in these learning experiences. Other teachers have used platforms such as Google Classroom and SeeSaw to present learning. Of course, none of us had any idea that when we left on March 13, we would not return for this academic year. As we end this current school year, please know that we will continue our efforts to complete the instruction of the grade level standards.

Meanwhile, we are looking forward to what school looks like as we enter the fall. The best part about this situation is that the summer will provide our teaching staff with an opportunity to engage in lengthy Professional Development that will ensure that we will be prepared for whatever the 20-21 school year looks like in the fall. During the governor's daily talks, he has indicated that schools might not "normal" in August. We might be back in the building, or there is the possibility of some type of blended learning or it might be on-line to start the school year. As you know, life and situations change frequently. To this point, we will adapt to whatever changes so that we can provide an excellent academic and religious education for our students. Please be assured that we will do our best to ensure that the 20-21 school will be a challenging and productive school environment. This summer will give us the opportunity to collaborate with teachers on the staff to both support each other but also share various skills that each teacher brings to St. Catharine School.

I know that this current situation has been challenging to our families. Asking parents to be parent and monitor of learning is stressful to say the least. We continue to rely on our faith that will help us to endure and prosper in the most difficult of times. I know that our school faith community will not only support our families but also our teachers. Please know that you continue to be in the thoughts and prayers of our teachers every day. My morning prayer is always offered up to ask God to continue to watch over us on this difficult journey.

Teachers have noted to parents in interims if they feel a child would need summer tutoring or support. We have placed SPICE forms in some of these communications but please note that we have financial support for tutoring through SPICE. Just contact me if you need this help during the summer. I have confidence that teachers will or have taught standards for that grade level by the end of May. Some of these standards will be reviewed by the teachers in the fall, if necessary. Many of our standards build upon each other, so that will support an easier transition into the next grade level.

Please know that teachers will be completing intensive Professional Development during the months of June, July and August as Diocesan schools are engaged in a digital delivery system known as Digital Academy. This new system will replace our SchoolSpeak system and will provide one platform that all teachers will utilize for digital instruction. This system will also provide a better platform for parents in all grade levels to access student learning that will be supported by one digital system for all learning and communication. The teachers will bring their knowledge and love for your children in addition to knowing their strengths and learning styles to a new school year in the fall.

**A couple of important dates:**

**Monday, May 25**

Memorial Day.....No school activities

**Wednesday, May, 27**

Last school day for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students

**Thursday, May 28**

Graduation Exercises for Grade 8

(weather dependent)

**Friday, May 29**

End of 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter

**Monday, June 1**

Drop off of student books/ Chromebooks

Pick up of student materials left in desks/ lockers

(this date is weather dependent since we will be doing this in the parking lot)

We will confirm this date and give times closer to June 1

Progress Reports sent home to parents

**June 10**

And finally, it is with deep regret that I announce that Mrs. Mary Underwood will not be returning for the 20-21 school year. She has been at this school as a leader in the community for over 40 years. Her teaching has been a constant source of creativity, enthusiasm, educational knowledge and love for her students. She is a model for what teaching should look like in a classroom. She feels that this is the time for her to retire. I know that I speak for the faculty at St. Catharine School that we will miss her! I have been blessed to have her on-going support, vision, and loyalty to the families and students of St. Catharine School.

Sincerely,

Janet L. Weisner, Principal