



Saint Michael Catholic School

Since 1889

21 Sixth Street, Lowell, MA 08150

Office: 978-453-9511

Friday, August 27, 2021

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL PARENTS AND STUDENTS

“BACK TO SCHOOL” WEEK

Monday, August 30 through Thursday, September 2

The Practical “News You Can Use” to Have a Great First Week

Remember Our Theme for the Year:

*We are returning to a NORMAL school year in all things
(except for masks in the building for all in the school building always)*

Dear Saint Michael School Parents, Friends, Faculty and Staff:

It’s here! Back to School Week has arrived and starts on Monday, August 30th.

Today I offer the “news you can use” to make sure you and your child have a successful first week at Saint Michael School.

Even after you read this, you may have questions or concerns. If so, please know you are welcome to call, text or email me directly:

Principal Mark’s Direct Contacts

Mobile/Cell: **917-880-9648**

mrocha@saint-michael.com

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 30TH

Monday – Thursday 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Friday: School Closed

Office phone: 978-453-9511

IMPORTANT SCHOOL CONTACTS AND EMAILS

Karen Riley, Office Manager (Accounts and Payments)
sms@saint-michael.com

Janet Flood, Administrative Assistant (Enrollment and
Registration)
jflood@saint-michael.com

Nurse Kelsey
nurse@saint-michael.com

The emails for all other faculty, staff, specialists and aides
can be found on the SMS website here:
<https://school.saint-michael.com/faculty--staff.html>

SCHEDULE AND DRESS CODE FOR THE WEEK OF MONDAY, AUGUST 30TH

MONDAY, AUGUST 30

8AM – 10AM

PK3, PK4, Kindergarten ORIENTATION

By appointment already assigned and sent to you.
Parents, please drop by the office on your way out to check with Janet that your registration paperwork is completed.

8AM – 11AM

Grades 1-8: Drop of Supplies at School

Required list of supplies on website.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 31

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Meeting and Lunch for **All Faculty/Staff/Specialists/Aides**
The office will not be staffed during these hours. Staff will be available in the office 7AM-10AM and 2PM-3PM.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

7:45 AM

First Day of School (Half-Day), Dismissal at 11AM **Please See Drop-Off Procedure Below**

Please note the Dress Code

for Wednesday, Sept 1st through Friday, Sept 10

“Gym Dress” for Boys and Girls:

Saint Michael’s T-Shirt and Shorts, Casual Shoes.

All students must be in full uniform starting Monday, September 13th.

One School. One Community: The Uniform Recycling Program/Donation of Hand-Me-Downs

Thanks to Mary Frances we have organized a hand-me-down program for parents/students/alumni to donate uniforms that are no longer needed or that no longer fit. All parents are welcome to come during office hours next week to search through the gently used cleaned uniforms to take what you need. In turn, please bring over and donate any uniforms you

will no longer use. *Thank You for your generosity and community school spirit!*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

7:45 AM

Half-Day of School, Dismissal at 11AM

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

School Closed for Labor Day Weekend.

MONDAY, SEPTMBER 6

Labor Day Holiday. School Closed

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

7:45 AM

All Classes Resume. First Full Day of School.

DROP OFF AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE
Starting on Wednesday, September 1st

Morning Drop-Off Procedure

Please note the following:

1. Cars will not be permitted to drive through the School playground at any time, either in the morning or afternoon.
2. Parents, Family Members and Visitors are not permitted inside the school building on the first day of school or at any other time unless they come through the front entrance on Read Street and sign in with Janet in the front office.
3. Parents of PreK3, PreK4 and Kindergarten students are very welcome at the Orientation on Monday, August 30th. That's the time to walk into the classroom with your child.
4. Staff will be on duty at all entrances in the morning and afternoon to receive children and guide them to their classrooms in the morning and out to waiting cars in the afternoon.
5. Until the Covid Delta Variant emergency has passed, students will go directly to their classrooms where we will have morning prayer and announcements.

All PreK3, PreK4 and Kindergarten Students (1st Floor Classrooms)
Drop Off at the School Entrance Side Door on 5th Street

All Grades 1-4 (Second Floor Classrooms)
Drop Off at the School Entrance Door on 6th Street

All Grades 5-8 (Third Floor Classrooms)
Drop Off at School Gate, Walk to School Back-Door Entrance.

All Walkers
Enter at School Back-Door Gate. Staff will be posted at Gate Entrances on 5th Street and 6th Street to allow students to pass (but not cars).

Afternoon Dismissal and Pick Up

2:05 – 2:15 PM All Prek3, PreK4 and Kindergarten Students picked up at 5th Street Door

2:15 – 2:30 PM All Grades 1-8 picked up at 6th Street Door

BUS TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED BY LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Saint Michael students do have a right to bus transportation provided by the Lowell Public School District based on its policy:

School bus transportation is provided to students in grades K-4, who live greater than .75 mile from their residence or alternate address to their assigned school. Middle school students (grades 5-8) must live greater than 1.5 miles from their residence or alternate address to their assigned school.

If you want bus transportation for your child, click on the link below. It will take you to the Transportation Form for Lowell Public Schools. When you begin to fill out the form, you will see a drop-down menu. Select “Saint Michael’s School”.

<https://www.lowell.k12.ma.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=3552>

CALENDAR

Good News! The calendar for the entire academic year 2021-2022 is now posted on our website: <https://school.saint-michael.com/calendar.html>

If you click on a particular calendar item, you will see details for that event, if available. We are filling in items daily.

Also, this calendar is organic and subject to change. We will notify you when we make changes or add details on a specific item. Also, there surely are some things that did not get on this first presentation of the calendar. Please do help us by sending any additions, suggestions or comments to Janet: jflood@saint-michael.com

***Now for a bold calendar experiment,
try installing the SMS phone app for iPhone and Android.***

All the items on the SMS website calendar are now also available on our phone app. Here I want to thank our Academic Technology Director, Matt Stone, for developing the app along with our students.

To install the app on your phone, click on this link and then scan the code with your phone camera for instructions: <https://stmichaellowell.glideapp.io/>

If you need assistance, please email Matt Stone at mstone@saint-michael.com

CAFETERIA

- We will return to normal cafeteria and hot lunch service in the Church for all students in K-8, **starting with the first full day of school, September 7th.**
- PK3 and PK4 will remain in their classrooms for lunch.
- Nut Allergies:
 - No nuts will be permitted in the PK3 and PK4 classrooms at any time.
 - The cafeteria will have a table set-aside for students with nut allergies.

- Hot Lunch Cost for 2021-2020: \$4.00. Lunch tickets will be available for sale next week.
- Hot Lunch subsidized tickets available for those who request them. Our goal is to ensure that every student, regardless of means, has an opportunity for a hot lunch every day. **If your family needs assistance with the lunch cost, please email me in confidence by Wednesday, September 1st.** Saint Michael Parish is fortunate to have “guardian angel” donors who will provide a student in need with lunch for a month.
- Students will also have the option of a less expensive “snack lunch”. We will send further details next week on what is included in this lunch and the cost.
- Students may bring lunch from home any day and do not have to purchase from the cafeteria.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: COVID

I want to thank Nurse Kelsey and the “Covid Committee” for developing these commonsense rules for a healthy and safe school year, or until the pandemic is entirely behind us. These are the basics. There is much more that can be said but I am trying to keep it clear and simple.

1. ***All masks, all the time*** for all employees, faculty, staff, parents, visitors and of course ***ALL students, all the time, inside of the school building.***
Effective for all on Monday, August 30th.

Last week my memo stated, “plain masks”. What I meant to say is the written policy that was used last year; “*Masks cannot have words or political affiliations or inappropriate pictures.*” We will trust our parents on this and if we notice a mask that we consider inappropriate, we’ll quietly bring it to your attention. Students must provide their own masks and put it on before entering the building. For a brief “grace period”, we will have plain, disposable masks available at the entry doors.

2. Masks are not required when outside at any time or for eating.

3. Vaccinations are strongly recommended but not mandated. His Holy Father, Pope Francis has called getting a vaccination “an act of love”.
4. This will be a normal school year with **all instruction delivered in-person at the school site at all times**. There will be no online instruction offered. If due to documented illness or injury only, your child misses more than a week of school, the teachers will zoom briefly with the student to offer assignments and keep the child up with the class.
5. If your child is ill with the usual common flu symptoms, please keep them at home as you would during any normal flu season in any normal year. The only difference is you must present a negative Covid test to return to school.

As recently as this past Fourth of July we were all hopeful that this pandemic was over. Today of course it is far from over. Despite the weariness and frustration that each of us feels, we must move forward together and work together as one community to protect the health and safety of your children. **I will soon form a Health and Safety Committee of faculty, staff and parents to monitor the situation throughout the year.**

Again, the slogan for the year is, *Except for masks in the building, a normal year.*

ONE PARISH. ONE SCHOOL. ONE COMMUNITY.

Here’s a word and further information about the process we will use at Saint Michael School to make decisions. Together we have created a Faculty/Staff Council with three committees: Calendar, Cafeteria and Covid (soon to be Health and Safety). These committees were provided with the input which nearly a hundred parents kindly gave to me, Mary Frances and Father Chris during the three Open Houses we held this summer. These Faculty/Staff Council committees have formulated these recommendations by consensus, then consulted with me. My final step is to bring my decision to Father Chris for his consultation and final approval.

After the start of the school year, I will meet with the PTO officers to appoint parent representatives to the Faculty/Staff Council to be sure that we have consultation with all school stakeholders before a major decision is made. My starting proposal is to form three major committees:

Student Services Committee

(Cafeteria, Calendar, Sports and Extra-Curricular Activities)

Health and Safety Community

(Includes Covid and all issues related to health, safety and security of students and employees.)

Planning Committee

(Longer term planning for the future of SMS for the next three years through the school year 2024-2025.)

It Is Going to Be a Great School Year!

You have my sincere gratitude for the hard work you do to support your family and to provide a Saint Michael School education for your children. The faculty, staff and I will work just as hard to continue to merit your confidence.

I am looking forward to seeing you next week!

Sincerely,

Mark

Mark Rocha
School Principal