



*INSPIRING EXCELLENCE*  
*2015 National Blue Ribbon School*

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PRINCIPAL

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Dear Parents and Friends of Holy Cross School,

Summer Greetings! I hope this letter finds you and your family well as you continue to enjoy the more leisurely pace of the summer months. With the turn of another page of the calendar, we are reminded that the start of a new school year is just around the corner. With this in mind, I wish to share with you some important information relative to the beginning of the school year.

To begin with, I wish to extend a special word of welcome to those families who have just joined our Holy Cross School community. We are delighted that you have chosen a Catholic education for your children and even more pleased that you have decided to partner with Holy Cross in this endeavor.

Please note that student class assignments will be made available during the week of August 27<sup>th</sup>. In late August, your public school district will communicate with you about available busing for your child. Those in Middletown school district may access the following website ([www.middletownk12.org](http://www.middletownk12.org)) to view all details of individual student bus information. While we are happy to assist you in any possible way, Holy Cross School does not have ANY CONTROL over busing. If you have any questions, please contact your district directly.

We are pleased to welcome the following educators who will be joining our faculty for the 2018-2019 school year.

***Mrs. Lynn Williams (Music Teacher)***

Mrs. Williams earned her Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education from Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ and her Master's degree from Walden University. She taught for three years at the Eulalie Rivera School in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Island and then became the Choral Director at Thompson Middle School in Middletown where she just recently retired after 37 years of developing their music program. Mrs. Williams is certified in music, social studies, remedial math and language arts. She is also an instructor of piano and voice. With a great love of her faith and a passion for the teaching process, Mrs. Williams will be a wonderful addition to our music department.

***Mr. John Warn (4th Grade)***

Mr. John Warn graduated from Monmouth University in 2004. His NJ certifications are Elementary School Teacher Grades K-6 and Teacher of Students with Disabilities. Mr. Warn worked at the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School as both a teacher and Head Baseball coach.

Prior to entering the field of education, he was an Account Manager for Coca Cola Refreshments. He is proficient in *Google Classroom, IEP Direct, Genesis Power School, Google Drive, Doc Cam, Educational Games (Kahoot), Microsoft Office and Power Point*. During his interview, phrases that came to mind when asked about the term Catholic identity were "Faith, service, and hope." Mr. Warn will not only be a strong teacher, but a great role model for the children in our fourth grade program. He has accepted the position of Student Council Advisor and will be involved with the Holy Cross Boy's Baseball team.

### ***Mrs. Carolyn Vescovi (4th Grade Long-Term Sub for Mrs. Nicole Ariemma)***

Mrs. Carolyn Vescovi received her Bachelor's degree from Georgian Court University and holds NJ certifications as an Elementary School Teacher K-8 and Teacher of the Handicap K-12. She has recently retired from public education having worked as a teacher at MOESC from 1990-1999, Manasquan Elementary School from 1999-2000 and Brielle Elementary School from 2000-2018. Mrs. Vescovi spent the last two years teaching Literacy and Math to Grades 3, 4 and 5 in the Resource Room, and she also has taught Math in-class support for Grade 6 and Social Studies/Science in-class support for Grade 4. She notes as one of her biggest accomplishments her ability to teach all subjects and differentiate to meet ALL the needs of her students. Mrs. Vescovi will ensure that the fine work begun by Mrs. Ariemma will continue during her absence.

### **Kim Clauss has been promoted!**

Effective August 7<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Kim Clauss has been selected as Interim Principal at St. Paul's School in Princeton, NJ. Kim has been at Holy Cross School since 2000 and will be greatly missed by faculty, parents and those children whose lives she touched.

### **Facilities Updates**

Much has occurred throughout the building during the weeks of summer. The following is a brief summary of projects completed in preparation for the new school year:

- Interior Painting – Both the new and original wings of the school have been newly painted, including classrooms, hallways and offices.
- 76 Chromebook Flip computers were ordered and should be up and running for Mrs. DiBiasi and Mrs. Mulholland's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class as well as Mrs. McCullough's English class. The additional computers will be placed in Ms. Evan's Technology Room.
- A new piano dolly was purchased so that the upright piano can be moved from the classroom to the gym for performances.
- A new DVD player was purchased for the music room
- The curtain in the gym separating the lunch area and gym has been fixed.
- The basketball hoops have all been inspected and are working properly.
- New carpet has been placed in Mrs. Jarck's classroom and the MOESC/Aftercare classroom.
- 5 new water fountains with filters and water bottle fillers have been installed throughout the building
- We have created a Tech Lab which will be overseen by Amy Evans. This classroom will be designated for our new STEM lab for the 2019-2020 school year.

I want to specifically thank the PTA for their generous support of these projects. It is through the fundraising of the past school year that the PTA has been able to fully cover the cost of these various initiatives.

As you prepare for the beginning of the new school year, I hope that the following information will prove helpful.

### **First Day of School for Grades 1 through 8**

Tuesday, September 4th: 8:00 a.m. until noon (Half Day)  
Wednesday, September 5th: 8:00 a.m. until noon (Half Day)  
Thursday, September 6th: 8:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. (Full Day)  
Friday, September 7th: 8:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. (Full Day)

The school doors close promptly at 8:00 a.m. Any child coming into Homeroom after 8:00 a.m. will be marked late.

You are asked to drop off your child(ren) in the carpool line prior to 8:00 a.m. Children will enter the building via the Parking Lot entrance way and report directly to their homerooms. The school doors will open at 7:30 a.m. and children may report to Room 113 where there will be a staff member who will supervise the children until the 8:00 a.m. homeroom.

### **Pre-school Update – The New Adventure Begin!**

The 2018-2019 Holy Cross Preschool begins Tuesday, September 4th with Back to School Night at 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. in respective classrooms. Later in August, you will receive a letter and your child will receive a post card with class assignments.

**Wednesday September 5th** is classroom visitation from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

**Thursday September 6th:** classes begin 8:15 a.m. arrival. The five-day program dismissal is 11:45 a.m. and the four-day program dismissal (today only) is 10:00 a.m.

**Monday September 10th:** all classes begin 8:15 a.m. and dismiss at 11:45 a.m.

**Tuesday September 11th:** Extended Day for the five-day classes begin.

### **Welcome Kindergarten Parents from Mrs. Bell and Mrs. McDonald**

We are looking forward to meeting you and your child at Kindergarten Orientation on Tuesday September 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Knowing that the first day of school can be stressful, we are hoping that this will provide a smooth and happy transition into kindergarten.

**Tuesday September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018: 9:00 a.m. – *Please walk your children down to their assigned classroom to meet their new teacher.***

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. – Children will have fun touring the school with their teacher assistant. They will also have an opportunity to play outside with new friends. While the children are outside, parents will fill out necessary paperwork in the classroom and listen to a kindergarten overview.

10:30 a.m. – Parents will meet their children on the playground. At this time, you are free to leave, however you are welcome to stay outside and meet other parents and children.

**Wednesday September 5<sup>th</sup> - Half Day 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

7:45 a.m.– 8:00 a.m. – Kindergarten students will arrive on bus or by car. We strongly suggest utilizing the bus on the first day of school if that is going to be their normal form of transportation. Please dress your children in the school uniform and pack a healthy snack.

**Thursday September 6<sup>th</sup> and Friday September 7<sup>th</sup> are full days.**

### Make an effort to connect with the teacher

Your child's teacher will be a significant person in his/her life this year. So it's helpful for the two of you to build a strong bond. That way, you can work together, share information and head off any problems that may come up.

To make a connection:

- **Attend back-to-school night.** While this isn't the time or place for a long one-on-one talk, it will help each of you put a face to a name.
- **Share information.** Changes at home, such as the birth of a baby, loss of a job or pending divorce, can affect a child at school. Write a note, send an email or ask if the teacher can call you to talk. The more he/she knows about your child, the more they'll be able to support his/her learning.
- **Let your child know** you respect his/her teacher. Your attitude will affect your child's behavior in class.
- **Stay engaged.** Read the notes the teacher sends home from school. Fill out and return permission slips and paperwork in a timely manner.

### Promote effective study habits for a successful school year

Helping your child build homework and study skills is one of the most important ways you can help him/her succeed in school. And the start of a new school year is the perfect time to begin. Here's how:

- **Choose a regular time and place** for homework. It should be a quiet, comfortable spot free from distractions. Stock it with supplies, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary. Assignments are designed to reinforce and enrich lessons taught in the classroom. On average, expect 15 minutes per grade level.
- **Allow for some free time.** Many children need to blow off steam after school before settling into homework. Some like to exercise, talk about their days, or head straight for a snack. Keep healthy options available that will energize your child for work and play.
- **Encourage organization.** Effective studying starts with a to-do list. Older elementary school students should make one each day.
- **Pay attention.** Homework time is a chance for you to learn about your child. Does she excel at reading? Have trouble with spelling? Struggle with multiplication?
- **Be supportive.** Don't ever do your child's homework for him/her. But do stay nearby to supervise. It's OK to answer questions and guide your child through problems. However, if he/she seems to be struggling, talk with his/her teacher.

### Immunizations

Holy Cross School abides by the laws of the State of New Jersey in regards to immunizations. Children entering Pre-K must be up to date on all immunizations and also show proof of a yearly flu shot. Those entering Kindergarten will also need DPT, Polio and MMR boosters after their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. Students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade should receive a Tdap booster and an immunization for Meningitis before the start of school. Please contact Mrs. Borkoski, our school nurse, at ext. 1143 if you have any questions.

### Physicals

All children will need a physical exam conducted by their private physician in order to participate in any sport program in the coming school year. The teams offered include cross-country, soccer, basketball, cheerleading, track, baseball, tennis and golf. No student will be allowed to try out for a team or participate on a team unless a yearly physical has been completed and the necessary paper work sent in.

Children entering grades K, 3 and 6 must submit a yearly physical even if not involved in any sport program. The required form can be found on our website.

### **Allergies**

In order to protect our students with severe allergies, we made all our classrooms “nut free” beginning in September of 2017. You will find a complete list of acceptable foods on our website. The list is quite extensive and contains the only products allowed in the classrooms. We will continue to have a “peanut free” table in the lunch room.

### **Other Information**

The State of New Jersey requires parents to read and sign both a concussion and a sudden cardiac death form. This must be done yearly. These forms can also be found on our website and must be submitted for **ALL** students enrolled in Holy Cross before September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Parent/Student**

Handbook Information related to the updated student handbook will be posted on our website. Parent and child must sign the *Parent/Student Handbook Agreement Form* and submit it to their homeroom teacher by September 14, 2018.

### **Uniforms**

Parents/Guardians: Please see required dress code information located on the Holy Cross School website.

Holy Cross School is a place alive with much energy, enthusiasm, and a high standard of excellence. It is, indeed, a place where opportunities abound. We look forward to a fantastic year. If we can assist you in any way, please do not hesitate in contacting me or our front office staff. Enjoy the remaining weeks of summer!

Sincerely,

*Dr. Mark DeMareo*

Principal