



CATHOLIC HIGH PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

October 09

INTRODUCTION

We're already finishing off Week #8 of the school year. Can you believe that we've almost finished one quarter of the year? It's been a great year so far and our positive momentum looks to continue.

INFORMATION

1. We are excited to see our Academic Raffle underway. The Academic Raffle, sponsored by the Parents' Club, is a tremendous help to our school. We fund ongoing technology subscriptions such as turnitin.com and our content filter system, as well as special technology purchases. There are student incentives for selling available for certain weeks (such as this one). Please remember that we must account for all tickets handed out. If tickets are not handed in, family accounts will be charged.
2. We are also in the midst of preparations for our Panther Hall of Fame Classic Golf Tournament on October 17th. We already have more golfers signed up than we had play last year. However, there is room for more. There will be great food, great fellowship, and lots of great competition. Jamie Nelson-Hebert has really done a fantastic job of organizing the event and building up enthusiasm for it.
3. The Development Department, specifically Sharon LeBlanc have been hard at work preparing for the dedication of the Blake Dartez Memorial. Blake Dartez was killed nearly two years ago in a car accident on his way home from Patterson, where he was cheering on the volleyball team. We have compiled a list of all students and teachers who died while at Catholic High, St. Peter's College, or Mt. Carmel. The family members of the deceased have been invited to the Homecoming Mass on Thursday, October 22nd (8:30 am) and the dedication which will take place after Mass.
4. You will soon notice a change in the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel statue between the Elementary and Middle School buildings. Richard Hebert has donated his expertise to spruce up that area as well as the area surrounding the Blake Dartez Memorial in the Prayer Garden.
5. We are pleased to announce a partnership with Community First Bank. The Finance Committee has been researching changing our loan from a variable rate to a fixed rate product for over a year. Community First offered us a great product which we believe will save us money in the long run. We are excited to work with Community First.

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6. We are also pleased to announce a partnership agreement with Roger Broussard Photography. Roger will now serve as the official school photographer. He will take all team pictures, dance pictures, and will be taking pictures at selected school events. He will also offer a website where parents can order pictures, too.
7. We have been very pleased to work with Debi Johnson and Balfour for our rings and graduation announcements. We are going to expand our partnership with Debi as she will now take on our letter jackets, too.
8. Last Friday as part of our professional development day, our 4th & 5th grade teachers attended Mass at St. Edward's, sat in on a few classes, and met with the St. Edward's teachers. This is part of our yearlong plan to partner with St. Edward's to ease the transition of our incoming students.
9. The rest of our teachers began the day with an exploration of the LaSallian concepts of the twelve virtues of the good teacher (gravity, silence, humility, prudence, wisdom, patience, reserve, gentleness, zeal, vigilance, piety, and generosity). The Middle School teachers then broke into grade-level meetings where they discussed Stanford scores, ways to improve student achievement, and behavior concerns. The High School teachers learned about the new technology grant during this time.
10. Speaking of curriculum, as the quarter draws to a close, teachers are hard at work updating their pacing guides—that is, they are checking to make sure they are consistent with last year's material and checking to see if any adjustments need to be made. All teachers have been observed by their department heads during the first quarter and all new teachers have observed a master teacher. During the second quarter, all teachers will receive their formal observation by an Administrator. In addition, each department is working on their 2-3 standardized testing goals.
11. If you want to witness some of our student's best work, click on the Panther Prime Time link under the "Student Life" banner on the website. Jeri Beck uploads each week's episode. [Panther Prime Time](#)
12. Plans are well underway for the 7th grade trip to Washington, DC. Plans are beginning to take shape for an 8th grade overnight trip to New Orleans this fall, an AP English & AP History trip to New Orleans for a Broadway play, and the spring Mission trip to Nicaragua.
13. Communication has gone out to families with gaps in vaccination records. This is the first step—we want to make sure the records are correct. State law requires every student to be up to date unless there is a note from the parents objecting to vaccines on religious or moral grounds.

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GOOD NEWS

1. We received word last week that we have received a technology grant through the Economic Stimulus program. The grant will give us approximately \$110 thousand for hardware, software, and professional development training. The centerpiece of this grant is to put an interactive whiteboard on the wall of every high school core classroom (math, English, science, and social studies), a laptop in every core teacher's hands, and response devices in the hands of every student. This will put every high school student in touch with technology every day. This grant was written by Erin Henry and Genie Segura in partnership with New Iberia Senior High. The amazing part of this grant is that it is immediate—that is, we are ordering materials next week, installing as soon as possible, and beginning to work with the new materials as soon as possible.
2. Have you seen the Little Panthers? This is an amazing group of spirited young girls and is part of the reason that Kim Poirrier was the September selection for Employee of the Month. She has put her heart and soul into this group and the energy and enthusiasm that these little girls have injected into the school is much appreciated.
3. The Middle School Pep Rally took place yesterday and it was great to see the Middle School Student Council organize and take ownership of their school. I could do without seeing Mr. Jaubert in a tutu, however.
4. We now have snack machines in the gym. They are stocked and maintained by the ARC of Iberia.
5. We have purchased and continue to refill 8 foam sanitizer dispensers spread throughout the school.
6. We will be hosting 8 students from Guatemala for 7 weeks as part of the Catholic Student Exchange program.
7. Last month, we had a very successful sophomore retreat and the first Kairos retreat. Every sophomore is required to attend one of the sophomore retreats (the spring retreat will be held March 11 & 12). The freshmen are all required to attend the overnight Frosh Retreat on March 11-12. Please note—these two retreats do not end until 8:00 pm on Friday night. The spring Kairos retreat will take place March 6-8. The spring Kairos is open to all seniors and a limited number of juniors. Sign-ups will begin shortly.
8. We continue to see a very active Parents' Club. The distribution of yard signs were so successful that more signs have been ordered. And the Middle School tailgating last Thursday before the Central Catholic game was very successful.

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9. At the September 17 all school mass the following students were recognized as students of the month: 4th grade – Warner Simon, 5th grade – Jon Michael Judice, 6th grade – Edward Varnado, 7th grade – Anne Caffery, 8th grade – Nicholas Patout, 9th grade – Joseph Lissard, 10th grade – JoLena Broussard, 11th grade – Breigh Eldridge, and 12 grade – Sara Gibson.

RESOURCES

1. We are still collecting Community Coffee labels, box tops for education, Campbell's soup labels, and printer cartridges and old cell phones for recycling. Erin Henry's technology students are assisting with the counting in order to aid in technology purchases.
2. I recently read a great article on praising children. The article explores how the self-esteem movement has influenced parenting and teaching and presents research that general praise ("You are smart" "you are wonderful" "you played great") are ineffective compared to specific praise ("You showed great effort on that project" "you were very kind to your neighbor" "you tried very hard to get open during the game"). The most interesting part of the article centered on what happens when you praise kids for trying hard as opposed to being innately smart. This is a long article but well worth the effort: <http://nymag.com/news/features/27840/>
3. I have discovered a great website where you can get a well-written reflection on the daily readings as well as a link for the daily readings. It really works well with my phone because from time to time, it's good to grab a few minutes of calm and read. The site: www.magis.us
4. We have scheduled Parent-Teacher "conferences" on October 13th for grades 4-8 from 3:00-5:00. If possible, please wait until 3:30 so the car line can dissipate. This is an opportunity for Elementary and Middle School parents to pick up report cards and meet with teachers.
5. Shirley Briganti will begin math tutoring after school for grades 4-5. This is part of our remedial Title I tutoring program and students must be selected for the program through test scores, grades, or teacher recommendation.
6. Have you signed up for Voter Voice? This a free e-mail alert system that keeps you informed about state issues and votes that affect private schools: Go to www.laccb.org and click on "Voter Voice."

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REQUESTS

1. A.J. Meyers, our faithful and joyful custodian, has come upon some hard times. We have rented him an apartment across the street. We are scheduling the October Pay to Dress to benefit Mr. A.J. If you would like to contribute some extra money for AJ's rent, make sure to pass it along on October 14th.
2. Please encourage your students to sell their raffle tickets!
3. If you are planning to get involved with your student's Homecoming Float, please make sure that it is safe. We had a few floats last year that didn't appear to be safe. Mr. G has volunteered to inspect each float and he has promised to disqualify any unsafe float. In addition, we need as much supervision as possible on the floats. If you can help, that would be appreciated.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Homecoming is 17 days away. Click on the Homecoming 2009 link on the upper right-hand side of the website for the complete schedule. There is a full week of dress-down days and activities. The newest feature is the Homecoming Olympics—2 hours of fun for all students and employees on Tuesday afternoon.
2. We have a few Dress Down Days scheduled: spirit dress on Friday, October 9th (jersey day), Pay 2 Dress on October 14th (pajamas), 4 different days during Homecoming Week, and Pay 2 Dress camouflage day for grades 4-8 on Tuesday, October 27th, in support of Red Ribbon Week. It is also possible that Halloween costumes will be allowed on Friday, October 30th.
3. During Red Ribbon Week, we're planning a grades 6-12 assembly when we can bring in members of the District Attorney's Office to address students about the punishments they can incur through the use of drugs and alcohol. Special thanks for Mr. Michael Haik for organizing this 8:30 am presentation.
4. We're planning a Parent Work Day (tentative for November 7th) to help us in our preparations for the new Promethean boards. We're going to need help moving some teachers, moving some whiteboards, and other labor-intensive projects. We'll send out more information when the day approaches.

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5. High School Testing Day is scheduled for October 14th. The freshmen will have regular classes all day while the sophomores, juniors, and seniors will take standardized tests and then resume classes. The sophomores will take a practice ACT test; the juniors will take the PSAT, important for the National Merit Scholarship Competition; and the seniors will take the ASVAB, a career and vocational awareness test.
6. The freshmen will attend a morning showing of "To Kill a Mockingbird" on Monday, October 19th as part of their fiction unit.
7. Homecoming T-shirts are now on sale. Every grade is going to order a different color so the one shirt will function both as a Homecoming and a class shirt.
8. Elementary tailgating is scheduled for Friday night, October 30th, at 5:00 pm, before the 7:00 pm football game.
9. Home football games this month: October 23rd vs. West St. Mary (Homecoming) and October 30th vs. Berwick.
10. Home volleyball games this month: October 13th vs. Rayne, October 15th vs. Berwick, October 21st vs. Westgate (Turn Back the Clock), October 28th vs. Morgan City, and October 29th vs. West St. Mary.

CONCLUSION

I look forward to seeing you on campus in the next month. It's a busy, busy month with lots of great activities and fun for the whole family. God Bless...

Dr. Tim Uhl

October 2, 2009