

Summer Letter

July 20, 2021

Dear Parents,

I trust that your summer break has been safe and relaxing so far. Very much looking forward to another 5 plus weeks of summer break. However, with August just around the corner, it is time to reach out to our families with details to provide information and details to ensure everyone is ready for the start of school. Please carefully read through the information in this letter and if you have any questions, please feel free to call the school at 575-5557, e-mail Mrs. Balmer at vbalker@sjmms.org or myself at gpleger@sjmms.org. Please note that our summer office hours are Monday to Thursday 8:00 a.m. to noon. Our regular office hours (7:30 to 4:00) will resume on Monday, August 16th.

WHAT WILL OUR SCHOOL YEAR LOOK LIKE IN REGARDS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES?

Without question this question is on all our minds. At this point, the most recent information comes from a July 6th document from the Washington State Department of Health. It clarifies that currently face coverings/masks will be required indoors but they will not be required outdoors. It also states that they fully expect an update coming in August. Once new updates for the 2012 school year have been published, I will inform our school community through Option C (text and email).

NEW FAMILY OPTION C INFORMATION, please look for the enclosed letters which provide critical information for getting started on OPTION C. Additionally, I would like to encourage you to explore your personal Option C DASHBOARD to become more familiar with all that is available to your family.



FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET (YELLOW): The information on this sheet is what we have on record for your family. Please review it carefully and if there are changes or additions, please log on to Option C to make them. For phone and/or e-mail changes, click on the OFFICE tab at the top of the page and select CONTACT INFORMATION on the dropdown menu. For address changes select FAMILY PROFILE under the same drop-down menu. Please make changes on Option C between July 26th and August 27th or contact Mrs. Balmer at 575-5557.

Your child's homeroom teacher is listed on this form!

FEDERAL PROGRAMS THAT HELP OUR SCHOOL:

- **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**: Normally we participate in the National Lunch Program (NLP), however the USDA is giving all schools the flexibility to shift to the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for the 2021/22 school year. The SSO program allows schools to offer meals to all student at no charge. Yes, you read that correctly, all students can receive school lunch at no cost to the parents or school. Please note that there will be a charge for a milk (.40 cents) and extra entrée (\$1.00). We will receive full reimbursement for all ordered lunches from the USDA.
- **TITLE I TUTORS**: We have two tutors, Miss Ketcham and Mr. Schlieman, who are paid by Title I funds. Our Title I allocation is based upon the number of students who qualify for Free and Reduced Lunches. ***Therefore, it is very important to have every family who pays the reduced tuition rate or receives any additional assistance for tuition fill out the Free and Reduced lunch form before we start school on August 30th.***

We are obligated by federal policy to keep all family information completely confidential.

MEDICATION FORM: If your child is required to take medication at school, whether a prescription or an over-the-counter medication, the school MUST have a Medication Form, signed by your child's physician, on file in the Mother Joseph Center or St. Joseph Office. This form is available in any of the building offices or on the school website (SJMMS.ORG) under the "For Parents" tab - Forms. Please note that this form must be completed annually.

IMMUNIZATIONS: If your child is due to receive a vaccine, you will find a form enclosed with the details.

DRESS CODE AND MIDDLE SCHOOL UNIFORM: Please carefully read the enclosed policies prior to purchasing uniforms or getting haircuts. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Pleger at gpleger@sjmms.org.

USED UNIFORMS: If you have gently used uniforms that your children have outgrown, please consider donating them to the school to use as 'extras' we can use if and when a student needs to change due to a spill during lunch, crash on the playground or has a mishap during art. Please drop-off in the St. Joe's office at your convenience.

FREE UNIFORMS!!! We received brand new, still in the package uniforms from Blessed on First Catholic School in Kennewick. The owner is remodeling and gave our school community a variety of navy pants, shorts, and sweaters along with white and navy polos. These items are on display in the cafeteria. If you are interested, drop by the school Monday thru Thursday from 8 to noon to pick up free uniforms.

MOVE-IN NIGHT will be on Monday, August 30th, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. This event offers time for students and parents to meet their teacher(s), get acquainted with their new classroom, unpack school supplies, find their locker, catch up with friends/classmates, etc. Members of the Sister Rebecca Berghoff (SRB) Foundation will provide BBQ hot dogs and refreshments for families. Look for email and text reminders in mid-August through Option C.

ENROLLMENT NEWS: We currently have 372 students registered with 247 families. We have a few openings in PreK, 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 8th grade. The voice of our parents is critical in recruiting new families to our school, please share this information with your network of friends, family, and co-workers. It would be wonderful to fill all our classrooms to capacity. Suggest to those who might be interested to contact me at gpleger@sjmms.org or Mrs. Balmer at vbalmers@sjmms.org or call us at 575-5557 for a personal tour.

KINDERGARTEN & PRE-KINDERGARTEN FAMILIES: You can expect an informational letter from your child's teacher in early to mid-August. Among other important information for the classroom, teachers will set appointments for a personal meeting to meet your son/daughter, complete a baseline assessment, and provide an explanation of the orientation schedule for the first week of school.

ONLINE STORE: Our Parent Board offers sweatshirts (pullover and zipped), hoodies, and t-shirts with our school logo. These items may be worn in class or in place of the dress code polo shirt. Additionally, there are hats, water bottles and totes available. Follow this link for all the details and to order. Just click on the item you wish to purchase and follow the prompts. <https://sjmms.square.site>
To pick up ordered items on Move-In Night, orders must be completed by Wednesday, August 11th. We will have samples on Move-In Night for preview and will take orders (3 to 4 week turn-around)

BACKGROUND CHECKS: Diocesan policy requires that all volunteers complete a background check through their system. This means that all volunteers who may be around children (classroom, fieldtrips, driving, etc.) must complete the **Permission to Procure an Investigative Criminal History Report form** and submit to the Marquette office. Background checks are good for six years. Forms are available at <https://sjmms.org> under "For Parents" or in the Marquette office.

CAR RAFFLE NEWS: Our event chair, Donna Welch, has reported that we are working with Kelleher Motor Company in Ellensburg again this year to purchase our raffle vehicle. They have selected a 2021 Ford Bronco Sport. We are very excited to get the vehicle, print the tickets and possibly set up a few locations for families to get an early start on selling tickets. Donna is looking for a few more parents to step up to help with some critical jobs for the Raffle: towing the car and trailer to locations, be a contact person for shifts, help with incentives for the kids, morning collections, and stuffing the raffle packets, etc. Look for more details in early September Wednesday Letters.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE: The After-School Care program will be available for the 2021/22 school year. This program provides supervision for students in grades Pre-K to 8 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. on regular school days and from 11:25 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. on early release days. Fees: \$5.00 per hour per child. The registration form is on the school website (SJMMS.ORG) under 'For Parents' or in the Marquette Office. After School Care will be available beginning on Tuesday, August 30th for all students. We will also have staff available the first week of school from 11:25 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. to accommodate the modified schedule for our Pre-K and Kinder students.

LOWER VALLEY BUS: If you plan to have your child(ren) ride the bus during the 2021/22 school year you must complete a new bus registration form and return to one of the school offices. This form can be found on the website (SJMMS.ORG) under "For Parents" or in the Marquette Office.



Good News! Sports are back for our 7th and 8th grade students! We will kick off fall sports with Girls Volleyball and Boys/Girls Cross Country. Athletes are required to have a sports physical on file with Mr. Adams before they can practice. Practices for both sports will begin on Tuesday, August 31st after school. This is an early release day so please bring a lunch and your workout gear. Volleyball will practice at the YMCA – athletes will meet in the cafeteria ready for practice and then walk to the Y for practice. Cross Country practice site has yet to be determined. Students will need to have the following completed and turned in before they can practice. Forms are available in the Marquette office.

- 1) Eligibility Form
- 2) Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Form
- 3) Player/Parent Contract
- 4) \$50 sports fee
- 5) Current Sports Physical

WE WELCOME OUR NEW TEACHERS AND STAFF:

- **Mrs. Hope Juarez** – Mother Joseph Center receptionist
- **Mrs. Emily Wall** – Food Service manager
- **Mrs. Sonya Villa** – Food Service staff

OPEN POSITIONS AT SCHOOL:

- **3rd grade teacher – full time**
- **Kindergarten teacher – full time**
- **Long Term substitute teacher** (7th grade Language and 6th & 7th grade history) – early mid-September thru December
- **Substitute Para-pros** for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade.
- **Dishwasher** – 10:30 to 3:00 starting August 31st.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS:

Hours & dates are available based upon your schedule – days, nights, and/or weekends!

- Moving classroom furniture.
- Moving the barriers to storage.
- Moving band and strings classrooms to Mercy Building.
- Painting: walls and trim touch-up.
- Minor spackle/mud patching of scratches/gouges on hallway walls (apply filler, sand, re-paint)

As I said at the beginning of this letter – a lot of school details were covered and there is certainly a lot going on as we prepare for the start of the new school year. It is your commitment and involvement in our School Community that makes us St. Joseph Marquette Catholic School.

God Bless - Gregg