

From the Principal's Desk

August 18, 2016



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Holy Spirit School

*Celebrating 50 Years of Inspiring Minds and Igniting Hearts
1966 - 2016*

One more week to go...

The teachers have begun arriving back at school...early! We are all so very excited to start the year and to see the smiling faces of all of our students and to hear all about what they have been doing over the summer.

I've left below the schedules for the various grade levels for the first week of school for your reference.

Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, the Diocese of Arlington has adopted at all of the schools the Scantron Performance Series as the diagnostic and placement tool for grades 3-7 replacing the Terra Nova testing. Formative assessments have always been used in education and are regularly embedded into everyday instruction. Formative assessments are critical to student learning in that they provide timely feedback to teachers on where a student is on the learning spectrum for any particular skill. Student success and mastery is not measured as a fixed point and instead learning is on a continuum.

The Scantron Performance series is a web-based, computer-adaptive test which provides teachers specific information for targeted intervention and more individualized instruction. A computer-adaptive test means that each student's assessment will look different. As students answer questions either correctly or incorrectly, the computer will "know" the accuracy of the answer and will then set the next question at a comparable, higher, or

lower level. The usual length of each of the assessments will be about 45 minutes.

The assessment will be given multiple times over the course of the year as a part of a regular class period (no more "shutting down" the school for Terra Nova testing week). Assessments in mathematics, reading, and language arts will be given. Information gained over multiple assessments will provide a more accurate, truer measurement of academic growth as opposed to the one-time a year Spring summative assessment that Terra Nova provided.

We have been discussing, as a faculty, the change over to this assessment tool since last year and the teachers will be receiving training on not only the administration of the test but on the interpretation of the data.

The first assessment "window" will open in September. Results for each student in grades 3-7 will be discussed at the November conferences.

Attached below is "A Parent's Guide to Performance Series" provided by the Diocese for your review. I will continue to provide additional information as we progress with new program.

-Maureen Ashby

Principal

*"The future starts today, not tomorrow." - Pope John Paul II
Holy Spirit School Class of 2015*

First Week of School! August 29 - September 2, 2016

Schedule for Grades 1-8

Monday, August 29th:

- First day of school
- 11:30 am dismissal
- Morning Care Opens (please enter via Exit 11)
- Extended Day Opens (please pick up in the cafeteria)

Tuesday, August 30th - Thursday, September 1st:

- Regular 3:15 pm dismissal
- NO hot lunches served; all students must have a brown bag lunch

Friday, September 2nd:

- 9:00 am Mass

- 11:30 am dismissal
- NO afternoon Extended Day

Schedule for Kindergarten

Monday, August 29th:

- 8:30 am Parent only meeting

Tuesday, August 30th:

- First day for kindergarten students
- Morning Care available (drop off via Exit 11)
- 11:30 am dismissal
- No afternoon Extended Day

Wednesday, August 31st and Thursday, September 1st:

- Full days - regular 3:15 pm dismissal
- Morning Care available (drop off via Exit 11)
- NO hot lunches served - all students must have a brown bag lunch
- Extended Day available (pick up via Exit 11)

Friday, September 2nd:

- 9:00 am Mass
- 11:30 am dismissal
- NO afternoon extended day

Schedule for PreKindergarten

Monday, August 29th:

- 9:30 am Parent only meeting

Tuesday, August 30th:

- Parent and student orientation
- 9:00 - 9:45 am Students with last name A-L
- 10:00 - 10:45 am Students with last name M-Z

Wednesday, August 31st:

- First day for Prekindergarten
- Morning Care available (drop off via Exit 11)
- 11:30 am dismissal for ALL students
- No afternoon Extended Day available

Thursday, September 1st:

- Full day with regular 3:15 pm dismissal
- Morning Care available
- NO hot lunches served - all students must have a brown bag lunch
- Afternoon Extended Day available (pickup via Exit 11)

Friday, September 2nd:

- **11:30 am dismissal for all students**
 - **NO afternoon extended day**
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Back to School Family Packet

A reminder that the Back to School packet with all of the beginning of the year forms will be available for pickup on Friday, August 26th during the Open House from 1:00 - 2:30 pm.

It is important that all forms be returned promptly so that the school has current contact and emergency information for all students.

If you are unable to attend the Open House on the 26th, the packet will be sent home with your child on the first day of school.



Carpool

Carpool is always a challenge the first few days of school but it does get better quickly. If everyone could please follow the below reminders it would be a great help:

During morning drop-off, no students should be dropped off prior to 7:45 am. Teachers do not go on duty outside until 7:45 am (please note we work by the bell/clock within the school). No students should be dropped off in the upper parking lot and allowed to walk down the sidewalk to the front of the school. I know everyone is busy and has somewhere to be but for the safety of everyone

involved all cars should come through the front car line. (This excludes Prekindergarten families who drop-off in the rear of the school.)

The drop-off line moves much faster if students are ready to go when you reach the sidewalk. Parents should stay in the car and allow teachers to assist the students. All students must exit on the right side of the car so they step immediately onto the sidewalk. Regardless of where your child's class lines-up, please have your child get out of the car at the first spot at which you stop along the sidewalk; do not make multiple drop-offs or stops.

In the afternoon, please be sure that you are filling in one line at a time and I ask that you be cognizant of not cutting into a line in front of others who have been patiently waiting.

Parents may not park in the upper lot and walk down to retrieve students from the front of the school. Again, I understand that many are in a hurry and have places to be but for safety and out of fairness all should wait in the carpool line.

As after school activities begin and more children begin attending Extended Day, the carpool line will return to its usual 10-15 minute "event".

Thank you for your cooperation!



Vanpool

Information regarding vanpool sign-up is included in the Back to School Family Packet.

During the first week of school the vanpool slots for last year will be used with the EXCEPTION of kindergarteners who are now first graders. These students will be dismissed with the regular carpool unless they are in a group vanpool.

The new vanpool slots will be sent home on Friday, September 2nd. Current kindergarten families will receive their slot during kindergarten orientation.



Back to School Nights

For Grades 1-5, Back to School Night is scheduled for Tuesday, September 6th.

For Middle School, Back to School Night is scheduled for Wednesday, September 7th.

Both nights will begin promptly at 7:00 pm.

(Prekindergarten and kindergarten will have their "Back to School Night" orientation on Monday, August 29th in the morning; please see school calendar for times.)

Please remember that this is an evening for teachers to present general information regarding the classroom and curriculum. This is not an opportunity for individual conferences. If you have concerns or questions that are specific to your child, please contact the teacher directly and privately.



Family Folder Flyers

The following flyers can be found on the website in the folder labeled "August 18, 2016" (or follow the links here) For your convenience, some flyers are repeated with the newest flyers at the top:

School Flyers:

1. [Beginning of the Year Letter 2016](#)
 2. [A Parent's Guide to Performance Series](#)
 3. [Fall Chess Club Sign-Up](#)
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