



StJP COMMUNICATION

August 5, 2017

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Future Topics

- August 10
TBA
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TBA
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- [Mark your Calendar](#)
August 29
Parent Meeting
Saint Luke Church
7:00 PM

Let's Talk

Over these past six weeks, we have been communicating with you via weekly newsletters. The topics included in these messages were selected to respond to questions that parents submitted to us in June. Also included was information that came to us via parent appointments or simply through casual conversations. Not everything we heard was new information, but nonetheless still concerning to us. We thank you not only for your candor, but for the spirit with which you put forth your concerns. We know that you were motivated by a sincere interest in the success of Saint Joseph the Protector School as we move through this transition time.

It is our sincere hope that these newsletters have communicated to you our intention to take corrective action in areas that need improvement. We recognize that poor communication contributes to confusion and chaos and we need to improve our practices on many levels – from the principal's office to the classroom.

In this week's edition, we will look at communication from several perspectives since it is not limited to the written word alone. Our interactions occur in a fast-paced environment, in a variety of ways – via email, on social media, by phone, instant messaging, and non-verbally, which can be the most misunderstood means of all. No matter the manner in which we communicate, we must remember that ours is a faith community where our identity, integrity, and reputation serve our mission and must be consistent with our Catholic values.

Talking with the Interim Principal

As the Interim Principal, I have appreciated the encouraging feedback we have received from the StJP community to these summer newsletters. As an educator and parent, I have always valued the essential role the principal plays in creating a culture of continuing, transparent communication. This kind of communication thrives only through honest, courteous interaction between home and school. Our success depends upon the confidence and good faith we enjoy in the collaborative relationships between parents, teachers, and administration. The level of success a child experiences during a school year is strengthened by this cooperation.

Let's Talk About Social Media

There are many social media platforms available to us today. But social networking, like any other technological tool, is only as good as a user makes it. Have you ever read comments on social media sites that are more blunt than the statements would be if they were made face-to face? News, trends, videos, pictures, and just about anything else can go "viral" in a matter of hours. This kind of exposure can be either constructive or devastating.

We think of Saint Joseph the Protector School as a school family, just like your family. It is our goal to create an environment where our family comes together to solve problems in a positive way. When social media is used as a platform to share frustration, vent negative opinions, or criticize decisions, our entire family is affected negatively and we damage our reputation. Good communication includes good listening. We at StJP are committed to be good listeners to our parents and to our students as we create a culture where mutual respect is evident in all our interactions. Please join us in nurturing this attitude and culture particularly in your use of social networking.

Contact Us

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Let's Talk about How We Talk

For many years as an elementary school teacher, I opened my "back-to-school" message to parents with the following borrowed phrase:

Parents, if you promise to believe only 50% of what your child says about me, I promise to believe only 50% of what they say about you. Humorous, YES, but an insight not without merit!

Are we saying that our children are not truthful? No! But a child's perspective is not that of an adult. Taken out of context, information can be seriously flawed, exaggerated, or embellished. The same is true when adults speak of situations, individuals, or rumors for which they do not have complete or accurate information. This is how communication breaks down.

All of us, the principal, teachers, staff, parents, and volunteers in the StJP School community, must be vigilant when speaking about our school and each other. This is particularly important when speaking within "earshot" of our children. It is disturbing to hear children repeat information that they simply should not know. A phone call, email, or simply a question posed to the correct person, goes a long way to prevent unnecessary anxiety about something repeated that was incorrect from the beginning.

Parents are the most effective teachers when teaching children lessons about the words they use, the text messages they send, and the gossip that is just too tempting not to pass on to friends. Driving to and from school, transporting children to activities, or hearing tales of school at the dinner table are prime opportunities to *talk to children about how we talk*. By engaging children (or even other adults), in these kinds of conversations, you are partnering with us in creating a culture of positive and uplifting communication about Saint Joseph the Protector School.

A Final Note...

Dear Parents and Community of Saint Joseph the Protector School,

This newsletter on Communication is intended to demonstrate that we are serious about providing our school community with information that is both positive and helpful in moving our school in the right direction. We continue to be grateful for your confidence and partnership with us in this effort.

As we head into the school year, I am still available via email or by phone. Over these past few weeks as Interim Principal, one of the most enjoyable aspects of this experience has been the opportunity to talk with so many people who are invested in our school. Many of our teachers have come in to prepare their classrooms and we have met many of our new students and families as well. I sense the excitement building as August days slip away. Frequently, when informal conversations occur is when the best communication takes place. I look forward to connecting with you during the weeks ahead.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for our Parent Meeting on August 29th at 7:00 pm in Saint Luke the Evangelist Church. While there is never a perfect date to schedule a summer meeting, we look forward to as many parents as possible attending this session.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Alicia Farren, Interim Principal