

**WELCOME BACK
ST. PETER RC SCHOOL
2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR**

August 1, 2019

Dear New and Returning Families to St. Peter Roman Catholic School,

WELCOME!!!

It seems like we blinked and the calendar said August! Where did our summer go??? Weren't we just cleaning out our lockers, packing up our back packs and saying farewell to our friends? And now...fast forward ever so quickly...here we are almost in September. We hope that all of our SPS families are enjoying a healthy and fun-filled summer and that, in a few short weeks, you will be all ready to jump into this new school year, where we have many new and exciting things waiting for you...READ ON.....

We are excited to welcome many new families and friends to our Saint Peter family this school year. The great news about our school is out in the community and we thank all of you who have promoted our school through your conversations and actions. Sarah Nelson has been working to pair a new family with a returning family so that everyone has someone they can turn to if they have a question, a concern, or just have a new friend. Thanks to all who are helping Sarah with this "parent buddy system." And to all...never, ever hesitate to call the office, send me an email or stop me in the hallway. We are here for you and your children no matter how small your question might be...we are family! And you will soon learn that all of our families are the friendliest anywhere...we have all had a question or two that may seem silly, but I guarantee you, it is one that someone else is having as well, so shout out and get the answer that you need!

SUMMER UPDATES

God is so good and has blessed us with a bountiful and productive summer, filled with fun times with family and friends, sunny days and many memories of happy experiences...and we plan many more this school year.

While all were enjoying summer, more interior work has been done and we are adding the final touches to:

- A handicapped accessible bathroom in each of the Pre-Kindergarten classrooms (an age old request from Mrs. Shanks, whose wishes have now come true)
- Additional wiring and loud speaker capability to all rooms in the building and out to the new playground...allowing all announcements of a safety nature being able to be heard wherever there are children and adults at any given time
- The completion of furnishings in Grade 5, thanks to the ongoing generosity of our parish family
- Cleaning, waxing, painting and repair work throughout the building
- Preparation for additional safety features throughout the building to ensure the safety of all of our children and adults at all times

PLAYGROUND

Our playground has allowed for a great deal of enjoyment by our school children as well as members of our Lewiston Community. We continue to ask all who use the playground to be safe and have fun and be sure to take good care of the property.

WHAT'S COMING????? WHAT'S NEW AND EXCITING FOR OUR SCHOOL???

DANCE

Our newly hired music teacher also teaches dance...so we are planning to build in on-school time dance instruction for all students. Plans are not yet finalized, but we are looking at Ballet for the primary grades and Jazz for the middle and older grades. Mrs. Krajewski is currently enjoying her honeymoon and when she returns, she will be here to work on our new components as we build THE ARTS at SPS...stay tuned!!! ☺

PRIVATE VOICE LESSONS

After school lessons in voice will be available after the start of this school year. Parents, much like our band and instrumental program, will private pay at a day and time that works for you, your child and Mrs. Krajewski. YEAH for all of our talented singers ☺!

YOGA

We are meeting this week to finalize plans to bring YOGA to our SPS students, again as a part of the school day, and to help with focusing and all of the other good and healthy things that come from YOGA. Again....please stay tuned...we will share the details once all is finalized.

AFTER 40+ YEARS....GOD BLESS MRS. LINDA CALANDRELLI

With a twinkle in her eye and a smile as wide as the sky, Linda Calandrelli emptied her classroom today after 40 plus years of love and service to the children of our school. The twinkle and smile are symbols of two things, though...

One is the reduction of stress, planning, hall monitoring, meetings and plan books of which she has been a master, in her long career that started way back with her well-known "teaching of the apostles," as Father David always said!

The other part of the happiness is that she is not going away from the people and the place that she loves more than anything...SPS! Linda will start her "new, and long awaited, career" as a teacher's aide in our multiage classroom. In her words to me...that I will never ever forget...Linda said...,"I think I can really like being that person who cuts out all the apples and letters, and who goes home without carrying a bag of work to do."

All of our Saint Peter family is deeply grateful to Linda for all that she has done for hundreds of children and the children of those children over the years. She is a gift who loves Saint Peter's and is not ready, just yet, to say good bye. Linda will also serve as an ongoing mentor to the new teachers that join us, as she shares her skills, her materials, her wealth of early childhood experiences and most importantly...her love of our great school... with our newest staff members. God bless you forever...and thank you Mrs. Calandrelli, from the bottom of our hearts!

I am also excited to announce that Ann Kerr will be staying with her SPS family as our Assistant Principal for the 2019-2020 school year. Ann brings a wealth of knowledge in a multitude of areas, and she has been working very hard this summer to make sure that everything is in order for a great school year. Ann will continue to lead the STREAM initiative and we will continue to add new and exciting STREAM academies in our after school program.

We send our deep gratitude and best wishes to Mrs. Laurie Grenga who has taken a leave of absence to help with her new twin grandchildren in Rochester. Grandma Laurie is already loving her new role, but has assured me that she knows she will be missing school as soon as September rolls around. Those are two very lucky little babies, for sure! We will miss you, Mrs. Grenga...more than you know!

Thanks to Ms. Taylor Falzone who will not be returning this fall to SPS. She plans to pursue her Master's Degree full time at Niagara University. Thanks and good luck Miss Falzone!

Jackie Maass will also be completing her Master's course work this coming year, but has promised to be a substitute teacher for us whenever she is not in class. Your musical gifts were appreciated by all...thanks and good luck, Miss Maass.

Liz Yarussi and Nichole Grenga worked tirelessly to make Spanish possible for all of our students this year and we are forever grateful for the work and the job that they shared. Liz has completed her PhD. Program and is now at Niagara full time as Dr. Yarussi. Nichole is busy this year helping with her niece and nephew and planning a very special wedding...God bless you and thank you to both of you.

New to our SPS family are the following staff members:

- Mrs. Hope Wright (and her son Benjamin) teaching Spanish
- Mrs. Elizabeth Krajewski teaching Music and Dance (yes...ballet and jazz to all)
- Ms. Jackie Johnston teaching 1st Grade (Mrs. Montante will remain in our other 1st Grade)
- Mrs. Alexis Andrzejak teaching Grade 3

- We still have one position to fill and interviews are being conducted as we speak. We will make that announcement to you as soon as we are able.

CALENDAR

We have completed and updated the school calendar which will be on our web page and which is included in this mailing. This is the final draft of the calendar and you will want to post it in a handy spot. We have planned some new and fun things this year for our students and look forward to sharing them with you as they unfold.

A monthly calendar is enclosed as well to highlight the events of September.

TECHNOLOGY

We are excited to announce that our technology department has been greatly boosted by the awarding of both the STREAM grant and the Smart Schools Grant. All classes are receiving additional chrome books /IPads and desk top computers as we work to be sure all of our students (and teachers) are ready to meet the challenges of 21st century learning. Thanks to Mr. Gaynor who has been working all summer to ensure that each classroom and each individual middle school student will be ready to begin the first week of school with all materials ready.

WRITING ACROSS ALL CONTENT AREAS

You can plan to see much more writing in all classrooms and in all content areas, as we build a strong set of writing skills for all of our students. Students will be challenged to complete multiple writing tasks as they learn to respond, in writing to the different genre, in response to prompts and using their individual creativity. Ms. Ferenc will work in all classrooms as we ensure writing competencies for all students.

STREAM...

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, RELIGION, ENGINEERING, THE ARTS, AND MATHEMATICS

STREAM is the enhancement of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) work that is being done in schools across the country. The concept is one very familiar to education, and that is to teach concepts through connections and integrations, in a hands-on environment, to show meaning and application to the learning.

This September, SPS will enter its third year in STREAM. We will continue to offer our after school academies for all grade levels and our teachers will receive training this summer to prepare them to offer some new and different academy options. Mrs. Kerr will continue to oversee the STREAM project and all of its components.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

St. Peter's offers care for children from 7:00 am until 8:30 a.m. each morning that school is in session. After school care begins at 3:15 p.m., or immediately after dismissal, and runs until 6:00 p.m. Detailed information is enclosed for those families that are interested. **Wednesday morning, September 4, 2019, morning care will be**

in the 5th grade room, located on the second floor, directly next to the main office. Please enter through the parking lot doors. A full schedule for morning locations will be forthcoming. Currently we are making some changes in our Before and After School Program and we will alert you if/when they affect your children.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

All students must be in complete uniform on the first day of school and every day. We will be strictly enforcing our uniform policy this year, with a uniform check in homeroom each morning. Please help us by reading the SPS uniform policy, (which can be found on our website at www.stpeterrc.org), and being sure your child(ren) come to school prepared each day. Of special note are socks; all must cover the ankle at all times and cannot have any lace, ruffles or logos. Boys' hair cannot extend below the ear. No student hair can be colored or be of a distracting nature: (Mohawks, lines, etc.).

Violations will be noted and detention will be served. We count on all parents to help us enforce the uniform policy. The **angel closet**, which houses extra uniforms, is available for you to use. You are welcome to visit the closet, located in the back of the cafeteria, whenever the school is open. If you have any uniforms that are in good condition and no longer fit, we appreciate your donating them to the closet.

There will be a minimum of one dress down day each month, for a different charity. Students who have violated the uniform policy may not be able to participate in the dress down day.

TUITION

All families must have their tuition payment plan in place at this time. If you have not paid in full, you must go into the FACTS system website www.factsmgmt.com where tuition costs are deducted from your designated bank account for ten equal payments. All accounts must be current at all times. Thanks to all for helping us meet our financial obligations through prompt payment of your tuition and fees. Any questions regarding FACTS can be referred to Barbara Joyce at bjoyce@stpeterrc.org.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

Through the continuation of a Diocesan grant and a partnership with Catholic Charities, we will once again receive the services of a School Social Worker. Our Social Worker will be at SPS one day per week, at this time, and we are most grateful to have these services from Catholic Charities. The name and day(s) our Social Worker will be at SPS will be shared with all of you as soon as we receive confirmation from Catholic Charities. At that time, families receiving services last year will be asked if they would like to continue, and new requests may be placed as needed.

CTGP

If you are a member of a Catholic Parish **other than St. Peter's/St. Bernard's**, we ask, if you have not already done so, to have your Pastor sign and you return the **TUITION GRANT PROGRAM** form as soon as possible. While this program **does not cause a reduction in your tuition**, it does provide our school with additional funds from the Diocese to support our school. It is critical for all involved to complete this process. If

you have already done so, I thank you...and if you have not...please do so this weekend.

SCHOOL TIMES

Please note that all students must be in their homerooms at 8:30 a.m. ready to begin their day. Any student arriving before 8:30 a.m. must report to the Morning Care room and wait for the 8:30 start.

Dismissal will follow announcements at 3:15 p.m. (PreK3 and PreK4 at 3:00 p.m. at upper door), with bus students being dismissed as their buses arrive and are called. Walkers will be called in the order in which their pick-up car arrives in the transportation loop. Thanks to all for making this process such a safe, quick and easy way to dismiss our students. Thank you for your patience and help in dropping off and picking up your children on time, and following the parking area loop. Always remember that all we are doing with drop off and dismissal is to help keep your children as safe as possible. Please do not drop off your child in the parking lot or ask to have them walk to you in the parking lot...SAFETY FIRST!

LUNCH....

...Everyone's favorite part of the day! A calendar for the September menu and the lunch pricing is not available at this time, however it will be posted on our website (www.stpeterrc.org) as soon as it is available. Parents can pay daily or send in money to be put on your child's account. Please note that the applications for free and reduced lunches will be available soon. Please check our website under cafeteria for updates. **You must reapply each year.** Please return these forms immediately to help our cafeteria staff with their counts and their ordering. Thanks.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Mrs. Kerr has been working with all of our different school districts arranging busing for our students. She will personally call all homes the last week of August to give you the best information to date as far as drop off and pick up times. Please be patient, especially the first few days, as all of the glitches and kinks and timing get worked out and things eventually work into a routine. Please read the enclosed bus information, as well. Riding the bus is a privilege and all students must abide by the rules for safety.

PARENT STUDENT HANDBOOK

Please be sure to read and review with your child, the Home-School contract, attached, and be sure to ask if you have any questions. Also, please review the Parent-Student Handbook, which is available on the school website. www.stpeterrc.org. As equal members of our SPS family, we all have a responsibility to follow the rules and express the kindnesses to one another that help to make our school the best school possible for all! Please keep this handbook in a safe spot for easy reference. After reading and reviewing the contents of the handbook with your children, please have parent and child, (where appropriate), sign and return the sheet headed by September 9, 2019.

PARENT STUDENT HANDBOOK COMMITMENT FORM.

These will be kept on file in the office and we must have a response from each family. Thanks for your cooperation in making sure we are all sharing the same understandings for our school operations.

PEACH FESTIVAL

Each year SPS participates in the Peach Festival Parade with a float. Any family interested in participating is to report to the back parking lot at 9:00 am on Saturday, September 7, 2019, where we will decorate the float and prepare to march in the Peach Festival Parade.☺ All students are to wear their gym uniforms or any SPS clothing, and will either ride on the float or walk next to it. There will be candy to be distributed by the children to all the viewers. Please call Jen DiPasquale at 870-6157 with any questions or to volunteer. This is always a fun event and great way to show our school pride. Father Tom and Mrs. Ingham will both be walking in the parade with the students as well as any parents who would like to join us.

VIRTUS

Any adult who is involved in working with children in any capacity... classroom, substitute teaching, cafeteria volunteer, coach, club moderator, room parent, etc., must be certified through the Diocesan VIRTUS program. This program was instituted to promote and maintain a safe environment for our children. There are no exceptions to this Diocesan rule. Please call with any questions. **We are offering a VIRTUS training here at SPS at 6:00 pm on October 10, 2019** in the cafeteria. Please register online at www.buffalodiocese.org for this session, or for any session/location that works best for you. A list of additional sessions is available on our website at www.stpeterrc.org.

DEPARTING FAMILIES

For many different reasons, some of our SPS family members have moved away or made life changes that do not allow them to return to SPS this fall. To each child and their family, we wish you all of God's blessings in your new ventures...and remember we are always here if you need us. Saint Peter's will always be your home...we are friends forever, and here if you need anything at all.

NEW FAMILIES

Please be sure to let your children know that there may be some new students in their classes, as many new families are joining our school family across all grades. Please encourage them to share a warm and caring welcome. As parents...please reach out to make these new families feel the love of SPS, and be available to answer any questions they may have.

PRAYERS

Our prayer chain continues to grow as the need for prayers for many of our SPS families grows each day. Please take a moment to thank God for the good fortune and good health of your family and remember in silent prayer the needs of many of our children, our parents, our grandparents and extended family members. Thanks so

much. If you would like to join the school/parish prayer chain, please email Donna Seaman at donnaseaman@gmail.com.

SCHOOL MESSENGER

We have once again subscribed to a telephone broadcast system to improve communication between school and home. Please read the attachment for detailed information on what you can expect, and be sure that all email addresses, cell phone numbers and land lines are all up to date and accurate to ensure that you get our messages as quickly as we send them.

SPORTS

Please be sure to sign up asap for the sports in which your child wants to be involved. Mrs. Zahradnik and Mrs. Jegier are working very hard to ensure that all of our children have an opportunity to be involved in volleyball, baseball, swim, softball, soccer, and whatever other sport we can make happen. Please help them help you by registering NOW. Thanks so much. Any questions can be emailed to Mrs. Zahradnik at izahradnik@stpeterrc.org or to Briana at briana@jampus.org. This is going to be a great year for SPS sports!!!

MOVING ON...

As our new eighth grade class leads us into this upcoming school year, we wish our recent graduates the best of luck wherever they have chosen to go to continue their high school education. Know that you will be missed, and remember SPS will be your first home always. God bless and good luck all! We know we will hear great things about you Cole, Mario, Carlo, Ethan, Joe, Lauren, Libby, Layla, Marisa, Jillian, Olivia, Sydney, Matthew, Michael, Kieara, Jamie, Alexandra, Kathryn, Patrick, and Sophia.

MOVING UP...

And... we are very excited for all of the great things that will happen this year for the Class of 2020. This group of students will lead our school and each other as they enter Grade 8...their last year at SPS. The bonding of this great group of young men and women has been growing over the past several years, and will continue as they attend their Class Retreat at Christ the King Seminary later in September. We ask all of God's blessings on the Class of 2020:

Gideon, Amaya, Natalie, Joshua, Reece, Marissa, Olivia, Lawson, Jack, Kaliope, Ty, Robert, John, Camila, Alexia, Alexander (Alex), Ava and Elizabeth.

FIRST HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION MEETING AND OPEN HOUSE

All parents are asked to save the date of our first Parent Meeting and Open House which will be held on Tuesday, September 24, 2019. This introductory meeting will provide you with an opportunity to learn a great deal about the happenings this year both in school and with our parent group. Please watch for more details about this very special and important evening. Prior to the meeting, classrooms will be open for visitations.

FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL – EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

Thursday, August 29 – 5:00 PM

.....ALL students and families meet on the front lawn of the rectory with their backpacks and school supplies. We will welcome everyone back, and Father Tom will bless all of our backpacks. Immediately following the blessing, the teachers will greet you in their classrooms and the children can drop off all of their supplies. Our family back-to-school picnic is in the back parking lot. This is a great night to meet, greet and sign on to help with all of our Parent Group functions. A flier of information about this event is enclosed in this mailing.

Please be aware that the school doors will not be open for drop off prior to the completion of the blessing.

Wednesday, September 4 – 8:30 AM

First full day of school for all students
Students dressed in full uniform

Thursday, September 5 – 8:30 AM

Full day of school for all students

Friday, September 6

Full day of school

First School Mass – 9:00 AM – Church...ALL ARE WELCOME

Musical/Instrumental Program – 2:15 PM – Gym Paul Effman Music School

Saturday, September 7

Peach Festival Parade...see note above for all participants

9:00 AM – School Parking Lot

OTHER ITEMS IN YOUR PACKET....

PLEASE READ, PRINT AND RETURN PROMPTLY THOSE THAT NEED A SIGNATURE AND RESPONSE.... PLEASE RETURN REQUIRED ITEMS TO SCHOOL BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2019.

(An * indicates that the item(s) must be returned to school)

- This Welcome Letter
- School Year Calendar
- September Calendar
- Uniform Policy (on website at www.stpeterrc.org)
- Walking & Picture Permission Slip *
- Health Forms* (return in 30 days as noted if we do not have already) **PLEASE NOTE NEW IMMUNIZATION RULINGS**
- Electronics Device Policy*
- Textbook Loan Request Form (New Families Only)*
- Home & School Contract/Parent and Student Handbook Commitment Form*
- Parent-Student Handbook (on website at www.stpeterrc.org)

- Before and After School Program*
- HSA (Home School Association) Welcome Letter and Board Members
- HSA Mandate information available on website at www.stpeterrc.org
- Family Directory Information Request*
- Grilling with Grandpas...Blessing of Backpacks...Back to School Picnic....**ALL FAMILIES ARE WELCOME...A GREAT EVENT FOR ALL**
- OKTOBERFEST
- Parish-School Volunteer Form*
- Box Tops Information
- Bus Information
- STREAM Brochure
- CTGP Form (Catholic Parishes Other Than St. Peter's/St. Bernard's*)
- School Messenger Information
- Attendance Policy available on our website at www.stpeterrc.org

*Must be signed and returned

Thanks for your patience in getting through this very lengthy note. Please note that our future monthly newsletters and correspondences will be sent via email so it is critically important that we have an accurate and up-to-date email address for you so that you will not miss out on any important information.

So...we are off to another school year. I ask you, as your child's first teacher, to do all you can from the home front to prepare them for school each day. Of course, whenever there is an emergency, an illness or a serious concern, we will call you from school and let you know. Once again, however, in our effort to build independence and responsibility, we will not be allowing children to call home during the school day for forgotten homework or missing gym clothes...only emergencies! If any after school activity is cancelled or altered, we will be sure to get in touch with you from the office as soon as possible.

Our school will continue to be a safe environment for all. We expect to see many parents in our hallways the first couple of weeks of school, but in order to maintain safety and security, to develop independence, and to ensure that the high quality learning environment remains intact, we will ask parents to leave their children and greet their children from **the transportation loop**. We will have many adults each day to help with this process. PreK3 and PreK4 will receive specific directions for arrival and departure and I thank you in advance for helping us put this policy in place. Any time you come into the building after the first week of school, you must sign in and out of the building so we will know who is here. All of these rules are for the safety of your children which is my number one priority. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Most importantly, I want to assure each parent that every child that walks through our doors is special and will be treated fairly and lovingly at all times. All that we do, we try to do in the image and likeness of God our Father, and that is the message that teachers and students alike will model...will practice...will learn...will live!

You know I am always here if you have a concern or question...drop an email, stop by, give a call or send a text. Nothing is too small of a deal if it is important to you and your child. Enjoy these last few days of summer. Keep God in your heart and pray for all of us together as a parish family, that our parish and our school, as one, will grow in the love of the Lord.

God bless us all,

Maureen and Father Tom