

July 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! We hope you had a blessed, restful and relaxing summer. Our school Leadership Team has been very busy getting ready for the new year as we continue to celebrate 80 years of Catholic education!

This is a year that brings us much change and beauty to our school grounds. Our All-Star courtyard has received a complete makeover with new walkways, landscaping, and a Marian plaza in the center. Half of our classrooms received new windows and we have added iPads for each student in our middle school grades as well upgraded our technology infrastructure to help prepare our students for their high school careers. Our teachers have been busy preparing their classrooms and lesson plans that promise to make for an outstanding educational experience for your child.

Our leadership team is thrilled at the opportunity to work together with you to help our students reach their potential spiritually, academically, and socially as we educate them mind, body, and spirit. We are proud to continue St. Mary's tradition of 80 years of academic excellence while being a "Beacon of Light and a Harbor of Hope" to all our students. Please say hello to us in the days and weeks ahead and know that you can always contact us if you want to talk about your child's school progress.

Each year brings positive change. We extend a warm welcome to all the new families who will join our community. Also, we are proud to welcome the following teachers to our All-Star team:

Ms. Tamara Obionu will be teaching **1st grade**.

Ms. Deniece Lehrter will be teaching **3rd Grade English & Social Studies**.

Mr. Eric Givens will be teaching **5th Grade English & Social Studies**.

Sr. Vera Loggins, SCTJM will teaching **Middle School Religion**.

Ms. Jenna Palanza will be coordinating our **ESOL/ELL program**.

Ms. Juana Diaz will be teaching **Art**.

Ms. Katia Isidore will serving as a **Teacher's Aide**.

Some of our returning staff will be serving in different areas:

Ms. Lisette Castillo will be teaching Kindergarten

Ms. Leslie Reese will be teaching 1st grade.

Ms. Del Castillo will be teaching Middle School Social Studies.

Important information regarding the start of school:

- **Update your information:**
 - We will send vital materials, report cards, and information via e-mail. Please verify that we have the correct e-mail address and phone numbers listed on the sheet enclosed. Any changes should be sent to the Admissions office at Admissions@stmarycathedralschool.org. Please make sure to also include your e-mail address when you activate your Plus Portals account.
 - Phone calls, emails, and text blasts via AP Notify will also be made to notify parents of meetings or emergency changes. It is imperative that any phone number or e-mail address changes be submitted in writing to the Admissions office at Admissions@stmarycathedralschool.org. Changes may also be made in person at our office by parents or guardians.

- **Payment of tuition and any fees:** Your student will not be permitted to start school until registration for the new school year is complete including registration payment submitted, online registration form submitted, and FACTS account activation. The July and August tuition payments must also be paid. Any outstanding balance from previous school year must be paid in full before the start of the new school year. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

- **Important Dates:**
 - August 1st/15th – first tuition payment was due.
 - Late payment / NSF fees – \$25.00
 - Thursday, August 15th – Student Orientation Day for grades Kinder – 5 (early Release)
 - Friday, August 16th – Student Orientation Day for grades 6 – 8 (Early Release)
 - Monday, August 19th – First Regular Day of School
 - Friday, August 23rd – Signed Parent-Student Handbook Forms due to School Office
 - Thursday, August 29th
 - Opening of School Year Mass @ 9am in Cathedral
 - Family Back to School Night (Teacher Meet & Greet) @ 6pm in Auditorium

- **Student Orientation Days:**
 - Mandatory Orientation Days for students:
 - Kinder – 5th grade
 - Thursday, August 15 (8am to 12:15pm)
 - Dismissal: 12:15pm to 12:30pm ~ Aftercare fees apply after 12:30pm
 - 6th – 8th grade
 - Friday, August 16 (8am to 1:00pm)
 - Dismissal: 1:00 to 1:15pm ~ Aftercare fees apply after 1:15pm
 - On Orientation Day, student check-in will be from 7:30 – 7:55am.
 - Families gather outside the library/dismissal area to receive admission pass.
 - Students will report to their homeroom.
 - Parents/guardians may escort their child(ren) to class to drop off supplies. Adults should then exit the building so that classes may start.
 - Students should come in full school uniform.
 - Orientation day counts toward attendance.
 - Orientation days are Early Release day as explained above. Student will have lunch.
 - Families with pending obligations and/or not yet registered must report to the school office via the NW 2nd Avenue main entrance to complete registration.

- **New Parent/Guardian Orientation & Welcome w/ Leadership Team:** There will be a new parent/guardian Orientation Meeting held on Thursday, August 8th at 9:00am to formally welcome new parents to our school and answer any questions you may have. New parents/guardians are welcome attend mass at 8:15am in the Cathedral church prior to the Orientation Meeting. Please meet in the school auditorium.
- **Summer Reading:** All students (grades Kinder – 8th) have a summer reading assignment. Assignments need to be completed by the first day of school. Please check Plus Portals for information regarding summer reading packets. The information is also on the school's public website: <http://bit.ly/smcsummerreading>.
- **School Supplies:** All students (grades Kinder – 8th) should purchase the main school supplies found on the official school list prior to the orientation days. Please check Plus Portals for information regarding supply lists. The information is also on the school's public website: <http://bit.ly/smcsupplylist>. Supplies should be dropped off on the morning of the Orientation Day. Teachers may request additional items once school begins as needed.
- **Dress Code:** Families must purchase school uniforms at Continental Uniforms in North Miami. Students must be in the proper school uniform as of Orientation Day August 15 or 16, 2019. Please check Plus Portals (or our public site www.stmarycathedralschool.org) for information regarding the regulation school uniform.
- **Arrival to School:** the school cafeteria will be open as of 6:45am for breakfast starting Monday, August 19. Breakfast food is served until 7:30am. Students must be in the cafeteria before 7:40am. After 7:40am, students should report directly to their homeroom through the open gates on the south side of the camps. Students are allowed 3 tardies per quarter. After the 3rd tardy, a \$5 late fee will be charged per tardy. See handbook for more details.
- **Dismissal:** will occur in 2 waves on regular dismissal days:
 - Wave 1 (Kinder – 4th grade): dismissal starts at 2:30pm and ends at 2:45pm.
 - Wave 2 (5th – 8th grade): dismissal starts at 3:00pm and ends at 3:15pm.
 - Students must report to their assigned area with the assigned teacher.
 - Students will only be allowed to go home via the dismissal method listed at registration time on the dismissal form. Any other arrangements or changes must be made by the parent/guardian via the school office.
 - Families with children in both grade groups will be dismissed in Wave 2.
 - Students not picked up by the end of their dismissal will report to the Aftercare Program. Fees may apply. See Parent-Student Handbook for further details.
- **Aftercare Program:** is a requirement for students in all grades that are not picked up by the end time of their dismissal wave as listed above and in Parent-Student Handbook. Aftercare lasts until 6:00pm Monday through Friday unless otherwise noted on digital school calendar. The Aftercare Program will begin on the Orientation Days. Students that will be attending regularly must be pre-registered. Otherwise, a daily fee of \$10 will apply and must be paid by the end of the week that the student attended Aftercare.
- **School Calendar:** all official school events and times can be found on the school's Plus Portals.

- **Plus Portals:** student academic grades are available on Plus Portals in every subject. Plus Portals is an actual copy of the subject teacher's grade book which shows classwork, homework, quiz, project and test grades. This is the equivalent of a constant "Progress Report" because a running grade average is available in every subject. To have personal access to Plus Portals you must have a computer with an e-mail address and a Plus Portals access code. This access code is supplied by the school and is set to the email address you supplied at registration. Activation information will be sent via email the first days of school. If you do not receive it by August 19, please contact the school office.
- **Physical Examination and Immunization Forms:** All students must have a current physical and immunization form filed with the school office prior to attending school. If your child is an athlete, an additional form Athletic Release from must be completed. Copies of athletic release forms are available from the school office. Immunization exemptions are not accepted.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act – Parent Notification Information 2019: Prior to the end of 1988, all schools of the Archdiocese of Miami were inspected by the firm of Law Engineering in accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA).

As required by federal law, the three (3) year cycle for asbestos re-inspection has been completed. Schools within the Archdiocese of Miami were re-inspected during the 2018 school year by the firm of ARS Environmental, Inc. St. Mary's Cathedral School was found to be in full compliance with federal standards.

In further accordance with AHERA 40 CRF 763.93 (g), Asbestos related documentation is available without restriction for your inspection at the school's administrative office or at the Archdiocese of Miami Pastoral Center, 9401 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami Shores, FL.

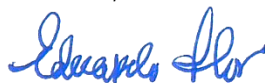
As we begin the new school year, we truly believe that communication is the key to a successful educational experience. Education is a partnership between all members of the school, students, parents/guardians and the community. All students are more successful when we work together as a team. It is important to note that the research shows when parents and guardians are involved in their student's education, all students do better in school.

There are several ways that parents / guardians can help their student have a successful school year:

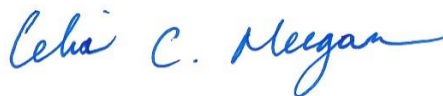
- Send your student to school every day on time.
- Make sure your student gets at least eight hours of sleep each night. "Unplug" two hours before bed. This gives your student's brain a chance to unwind and get ready for sleep.
- Establish a routine for homework. Give your student a quiet place to study and consistent time each evening to work on school assignments.
- Keep in touch with your student's teacher via email or telephone.
- Attend school events, classroom events, and conferences.

We are honored to serve as your St. Mary's Cathedral School Leadership Team. Thank you for entrusting your child to our care. We look forward to making it a great year together. Go All-Stars! May God bless you and your family.

Yours in Christ,



Eduardo Flor, M.S.Ed.
Principal



Celia Meegan, M.S.ECE
Assistant Principal (K-4th)



Katrina De La Fe, M.S.
Assistant Principal (5th – 8th)