

# September Newsletter 2011

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST SCHOOL – HYDES

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Dear Parents,

Once again, "Mother Nature" had her way with the weather and delayed the opening of school. Despite the delay, school opened with students and teachers filled with great expectations for a wonderful year! Rooms and hallways have been decorated for over a week, just waiting to come alive with the voices of our students, which finally happened! This is truly the best time of the year!

## Welcome:



Once again, I welcome back parents and students who were part of Saint John School last year; and with equal enthusiasm, I welcome new parents and new students who join our school family for the first time. A heartfelt welcome back is also extended to the faculty and staff who are returning and to those new to our school. Our new PK 3 teacher is Mrs. Carroll and Ms. Marisa Creamer will be joining Mrs. Zorn and Mrs. Phillips in the PK 4

class. Welcome to the newbies!

We pray for a successful school year, a year of cooperation and partnership between home and school. We look forward to your active participation in the Home and School Association. Soon you will be receiving valuable information about the works and plans for this year's Association and how you can help.

## Theme:

An on-going task in Catholic schools is to maintain "Catholic Identity." This year we will be keeping the same theme as last year. We found it was so important that we needed more time to work on all the components. So, the faculty and students are joining to follow the theme: "Do unto others." I plan to visit each class the first week of school to explain our theme and to explain how we can accomplish this goal throughout the year by not saying or doing anything that will hurt someone's feelings. All teachers will be using the theme as a guide for discussion and infusion throughout the curriculum.

Also popular is the "Theme Day" we have each month to coincide with Hot Lunch in the hall. The faculty has decided, instead of coming out of uniform, students will wear their uniforms but enhance it during the theme days. This year, the themes for each month are:

September 14 – Crazy Socks Day

October 12 – Wear Pink for Cancer (Students will be asked for \$1.00 to Sponsor Mrs. Gardner in the "Race for the Cure.")

November 16 – Ravens

December 15 – Wear Red and Green (**This is the day after Hot Lunch.**)

January 18 – Sweatshirt Day

- February 14 – Wear Red for Valentine's Day (**This is the day before Hot Lunch.**)
- March 14 – Wear Green Day
- April 18 – Take me out to the Ballgame (Orioles Day)
- May 23 – Favorite or Crazy Hat Day

### **Back to School:**

Just a reminder as we begin this new school year - In addition to the school supplies, uniforms, and shoes, it is our hope that every student has access to a working computer and printer. Many of the teachers are online with notes and links to age-appropriate websites for students. There are also websites that enhance our curriculum produced by the textbook companies.

### **1st Issue:**

This is the first issue of the monthly Newsletter for the 2011-2012 school year. Most families are accustomed to the format. I want to give a brief overview for the new families. The Newsletter will be online at <http://www.stjohnhydes.org> usually the first week of the month. **It will not be sent home with the children.** It includes highlights of the previous month and information concerning upcoming events. A tentative yearly calendar is also online, and each month the updated monthly calendar is placed online. I try to include short articles on parenting (reprinted with permission from Parents Make the Difference), the Readiness, Elementary, and Middle School editions. In addition, Home and School Association news is included. We will once again attempt to email parents when the Newsletter for the coming month is put online. Beginning the first week of school, you will be getting the Weekly Update which lists events happening during the next week. If you have changed your email address, please notify the office. If you do not receive notification, also let us know.

### **Uniforms:**

I ask for your continued cooperation in purchasing only the official summer and winter uniforms, as well as gym wear, from Flynn and O'Hara Uniform Company. We also have a large uniform exchange through Laura Kozak Canoles.

### **Progress Reports:**

The report is part of an internet-based student information system called PowerSchool. This year, we will continue with the computerized card. We will make use of the demographic and emergency medical sections. We also continue to use the Parent Access component of PowerSchool. What does that mean for you, the parent of a student in grades three to eight? You will be able to connect to PowerSchool and see an instant interim report anytime that is convenient for you. Parent access will be opened on, or about, October 1. Parents of Grade 3 students and students new to the school will be notified prior to October 1 giving you directions on getting your username and password.

### **Stand for Children and Youth:**

Any parent or guardian, grandparent, etc. who wishes to volunteer in the school or to accompany students on field trips must be STAND certified. New parents were sent applications and consent forms during the summer. We want to thank those who have returned the completed forms over the summer and urge those who have not to please do so at your

earliest convenience. We will then be able to begin the certification process. I will notify those whose certification is complete so that you may pick up your card in the office.

**AlertNow:**

If any family needs to update their AlertNow information, which includes 2 primary phone numbers and 2 email addresses (submitted previously), please email the updated information to us as soon as possible. (This is different from the Demographic and Emergency information that we have asked you to update.)

**Milk:**

Again this year, our school nurse will be organizing the milk program. Students in Grades K through 8 and PK, who attend Extended Day, may order milk for lunchtime. We offer white or chocolate milk. The charge for milk will be \$28.00 for the year for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. You must order for the entire year. This year, we are also offering students who use Extended Care and attend morning Pre-Kindergarten classes to purchase milk for lunchtime. The yearly cost for the PK 4 Extended Care students is \$28.00 for the year, and the cost for the PK 3 Extended Care students is \$18.00 for the year.

If you would like to order milk, send your check, along with the milk order form which was sent home the first day of school, to Mrs. Tabassi, our school nurse. Make checks payable to Saint John the Evangelist School.

**Lunch Program:**

The lunch provider for the upcoming school year is *Good Taste Catering, LLC*. We used them last year and most families were pleased with the selections. They have a wide menu selection consisting of five offerings each time (a hot entrée, salad, sandwich, bagel, or turkey sandwich) along with a selection of à la carte items including sides, dessert, and drinks. The ordering process is online, and you have received an email with instructions for setting up your account and ordering. Classroom lunches will continue to be on Wednesdays with lunch in the Church Hall, one day a month. To register with the lunch program and place orders, go to <http://www.goodtastecatering.info>, then go to the "Lunch Ordering" page and click on the "Registration/Lunch Ordering" link to sign in or register. Our school password is SJE128. Registration and lunch orders may be placed starting August 15, 2011. Lunch delivery will start on Wednesday, September 14, 2011. If there are any questions or concerns regarding the new lunch program, feel free to contact Sherri Suehle via email [sherri.suehle@gmail.com](mailto:sherri.suehle@gmail.com).

**\*All Kindergarten Parents and New Parents of students in Grades 1 through 8 may order a student lunch, delivered to the classroom, almost every Wednesday of the month. Follow the above link.**

**\*\*Once a month, we have a Hot Lunch in the Church Hall. All students in Grades K through 8 and PK students, who attend Extended Day, can order Hot Lunch by following the above link. The dates for Hot Lunch are listed on the tentative calendar and in this Newsletter.**

**Playground Duty:**

Each parent (Grades 1 through 8) is asked to assist with recess duty, 3 days per year, for each enrolled student in the school. The homeroom parent will notify families concerning scheduling, beginning with the 8th Grade. An explanation of playground duties is posted on our website. Compliance with the Archdiocesan Policy on the Protection of Children and Youth mandates that all volunteers must complete the volunteer application and consent form, and participate in the online video presentation. They will then receive two booklets: one, the Statement of Policy, and the other, the Code of Conduct. If you need more information, please contact the school office.

**Meet the Teachers – Grades K through 8:**

Keep Wednesday, September 14, 2011, open on your calendar so that you can attend "Meet the Teachers" Night beginning at 7:00 PM. On this night, teachers begin formal communication with you concerning what goes on every day, and give you an overview of the year. These meetings are important to both parents and teachers. If students accompany you, please make sure they remain with you throughout the evening. They may not run around the building or in and out of doors. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter. **Prior to this meeting, there will be an important 8<sup>th</sup>-Grade parent meeting at 6:30 PM in the 8<sup>th</sup>-Grade classroom.**

**Demographic and Emergency Updates:**

In an effort to update our computerized Student Information System, each student has brought home a demographic sheet and an emergency medical sheet. We ask that you check for the accuracy of the information we already have and supply the missing information before sending them back to school. If you have not returned them, please do so as soon as possible.

**Cell Phones and iPods:**

At a recent faculty meeting, once again, a discussion on cell phone and iPod use was held. The unanimous decision is that iPods and cell phones are not allowed at school. If any electronic equipment comes to school, it will remain in the Principal's office for the remainder of the day. I must admit, we have decided to revisit our decisions later in the school year and will keep you posted if there is a change. We will discuss the use of e-readers with the students, but we have no place to store them to keep them safe at this time.

**Applause, Applause:**

Hurrah for all the students of Saint John the Evangelist School as we begin a new school year filled with growing, learning, and FUN.

**Extended Day:**

The Extended Day program is offered to families who need child care for school-aged children. There is an additional charge for this service. The program is open from 11:15 AM to 6:00 PM and is located in the Church Hall.

Because we offer this service, students who are not picked up from school by 3:30 PM will be sent to Extended Day and will be charged the drop-in rate of \$15.00.

### **Labels and Receipts:**

We have several ways that you can help our school. One is the "Labels for Education" program. All Campbell soup labels, as well as many other product labels, should be sent to the school office. Our school receives credit which can be used to purchase supplies. Another is the "Box Tops for Education" program. Target, Safeway, and Giant also offer incentives to schools.

If you prefer to shop online, go to our school website at <http://www.stjohnhydes.org>.

There is a link to schoolpop.com that will lead you to many merchants where you may order online and our school receives a percentage bonus.

We also recycle ink cartridges from printers and have recycling bins on the premises for recycling your paper.

### **Ident-A-Kid:**

Again this year, the Ident-A-Kid Program will be at Saint John School. They will be here on September 29, 2011, to photograph, fingerprint, weigh, and measure children. Participation in the program is the option of individual parents. A fee will be charged and the parents will be provided with a laminated wallet size ID card (similar to a driver's license) with information about their child. An application envelope with additional information about the Ident-A-Kid program will be sent home with the children about one week before the program date. The local Program Director is Donna Aversa-Smith.

### **Homework Club**

Homework Club will be held Monday through Thursday, 3:15 PM to 4:15 PM, starting September 6, 2011. You do not need to sign up for the entire year. You do not need commit to a certain day/days each week. You can even send your child only when their sibling has Scouts to avoid 2 pick-ups! If needed, we can walk students to After Care for parents who are not able to pick up their children by 4:15 PM. Please contact Ms. Zankowitz, [tzankowitz@stjohnhydes.org](mailto:tzankowitz@stjohnhydes.org), for fee and other important information.

### **Home and School Association (H.A.S.A.) from Anna Wehberg (President):**

Welcome back to everyone! For those who are new to the school, thank you for choosing Saint John, and I hope that you will enjoy your years with us. As an introduction, the H.A.S.A. (Home and School Association) is the Archdiocesan version of a PTA. We raise funds to support the teachers and the school, plan social and educational events for parents and families, and provide assistance for routine events, such as the classroom and hot lunch programs. As a parent or guardian of a Saint John student, you are a member of the H.A.S.A. Your input is welcome, and we are open to suggestions or ideas for fundraisers or events.

The 2011-2012 H.A.S.A. Committee includes:

Anna Wehberg

John Canoles

Anne McFaul

Michelle Carrigan

Sherri Suehle

Beth Ozazewski

Mary Beth Bressler

H.A.S.A. also has a link from the school website where you'll find more information along with meeting minutes.

Innisbrook:

Innisbrook Wrapping Paper packets went home the 1st week of school. Please support this program; the product is a great one and the % that we make on each purchase is very high!

Market Day:

For those who order every month, this is true "preaching to the choir," but Market Day has some wonderful products that are staples in everyone's pantry! The prices are comparable, so please consider using this service. We place an order monthly, and orders are delivered to the school. Pick up is in the Church Hall.

Used Uniforms:

A big "Thank You" to Laura Kozak and John Canoles for holding the Used Uniform Sale over the summer.

Upcoming Events:

September 6 – Welcome Back Coffee

Join us in the Church Hall immediately after drop-off for a cup of coffee and small snack to celebrate the beginning of another school year.

September 21 – The First General Meeting of the H.A.S.A., at 7:00 PM in the Church Hall.

September 23 – Family BINGO!

A fun night for everyone! Prizes, food, lots and lots of numbers. Join us for this annual fall tradition! Please contact Laura Kozak, if you can help with this fun night.  
[kogancom@comcast.net](mailto:kogancom@comcast.net)

Last, but not least, the Fathers' Club is holding the first Back-to-School Bash at DeJon Vineyards on September 9 from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM. We hope to see many of you there.

Here's to a great school year!

*Jean Delcher*



# Parents *make the difference!*

Early Childhood – September 2011

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## Make the most of your time together this school year

The beginning of preschool is an exciting time for both parents and children. It is also a return to a busier schedule. The school year always comes with a longer to-do list. But spending time with your child is still important--and necessary for her school success!



Carve out time every day for certain activities and don't let anything else interfere. Eat at least one meal together every day. Get some exercise together. Read together every day.

In addition, you and your preschooler can:

- Start a project together. This can be a jigsaw puzzle, a family newsletter, a weekly baking session--anything you enjoy doing together.
- Care for something together. This is natural if you have a family pet, especially a dog that you can walk and feed together. But if not, consider getting an easier pet, such as a fish, and learning about fish care with your child. Or take care of your indoor plants together and tend to them daily.
- Collect something together. Consider cards, stamps, coins or something from nature--such as leaves that will soon gain color and start falling.
- Volunteer together. Your child is young, but she is not too young to help you bake cookies and deliver them to the local fire station. Or to help you collect clothes that no longer fit her and take them together to a charity.

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### Building Social Skills

## Social skills should be a learning priority for your preschooler

What's more important than learning colors, shapes, letters and numbers early in the school year? According to experts, it is learning social skills!

Relating well with teachers and classmates makes it possible for children to focus on other subjects.

To build these abilities in your preschooler:

- Practice cooperation. Social activities (such as playing with a parent or friend) can help your child practice sharing, taking turns and getting along. So give your child plenty of opportunities to interact with others.
- Communicate often. Spend lots of time talking with your preschooler. When she expresses her thoughts and feelings, show that you're listening and interested.
- Talk with the teacher. Ask questions such as, "What social skills do you emphasize in preschool?" and "How can I reinforce them at home?"
- Boost self-confidence. Help your child take pride in herself and how she interacts with others. Say things like, "You shared your crayons with Billy. That's nice! He's happy!"

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## Make your preschooler aware of numbers and their purpose

Long before he does his first arithmetic problem, your preschooler should know that numbers represent real things. They have uses which apply to all of us in our everyday lives. Teachers call this number sense.

Here are some ways to further your child's understanding of numbers in his world:

- Show him that numbers are everywhere. It is difficult to be somewhere where there are no numbers. Point out the numbers everywhere you go--on houses, on packages, in books, in the newspaper.
- Explain why numbers are there. The explanation does not have to be complicated. For example, say: "This number tells the letter carrier where to leave the mail. This number tells us how heavy this bag of sugar is. This number tells us how much this particular toy costs."
- Work on the concept of "how many" with your child. This concept is one of the most important uses of numbers. For example, say: "That man has two dogs. We just went down four steps." As often as possible, use things your preschooler can see or touch (such as dogs or stairs) to illustrate this concept.

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## Kindergarten routines have big benefits for you and your child

The first day of kindergarten is a memory that will last a lifetime. But hopefully the second day--and most days thereafter--will be more routine. Why? Because kids need to develop everyday routines. Doing things the



same way over and over builds comfort and independence.

Your child can benefit from routines:

- At night. Eat dinner together and communicate without distractions. Before getting ready for bed, pick the next day's outfits, make lunches and put school supplies by the front door. Do bedtime tasks, such as bathing and saying good night, at the same time each night.
- In the morning. Wake your child at a regular time. Post a chart of responsibilities, such as dressing, brushing teeth and eating breakfast. Make sure your child has time for a nutritious meal.
- After school. Many kindergartners have homework, so consider the best time and place for studying. Some kids need a snack and exercise right after school, while others like to finish their work first. Do what is best for your child--and stick with it.

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# Parents *make the difference!*

Elementary – September 2011

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## Develop strategies to get this school year off to a good start

The start of a new school year is the perfect time to develop strategies to help your child have a successful year. Here are four strategies to try:



1. Schedule a regular time and place for doing homework. On days when your child doesn't have homework, she can read a book or prepare for an upcoming test.
2. Set limits on screen time. There's a link between how well kids do in school--especially in reading--and how much time they spend in front of a screen. So set limits on the amount of TV your child can watch and the time she can spend playing video games. If there is a TV or a computer in your child's room, move it to where you can have more control over what she watches.
3. Reestablish your routines for bedtime and mealtime. Over the summer months, these may have relaxed a bit. Remind your child that she will do better in school if she is not over-tired. Set a bedtime that allows time for reading before it's time for lights-out.
4. Choose quality, not quantity, for after-school activities. Too much scheduled time is stressful for kids and families. Help your child choose one or two things she really enjoys. This will leave her time for school work, family activities and unscheduled play--all of which are things children need.

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### Building Character

## Encourage your child to take action and promote kindness

Children aren't always kind to each other. They pick on other kids. They say mean things behind other people's backs.

But your child doesn't have to accept that unkindness as the norm. Instead, you can teach your child a simple rule: Do something about it.

If your child witnesses a classmate being treated unkindly or left out, help him think through actions he could take.

Your child might:

- Start a conversation with a classmate about a book he has read or a school assignment.
- Ask a left-out classmate to sit with him at lunch.
- Compliment a classmate on something. "Your handwriting is neat," or "I like that shirt."
- Just simply smile at a classmate.

The next day, have your child report on what he did--and how it made him feel.

As your child takes these actions, he learns many important lessons. He will learn how it feels to do something positive to help another person. Even more important, he will learn that when he sees something wrong, he doesn't have to accept it. Instead, he has the power to make a difference. He can do something about it.

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## Homework/Study Skills

# Promote effective study habits for a successful school year

Homework can be a major source of conflict for parents and kids. But even if study time goes well in your family, it's important to make sure you're covering the basics. Take small, simple steps that promote cooperation and good study habits. Remember to:

- Choose a regular time and place for studying. It should be somewhere quiet with no TV or similar distractions. Pick a comfortable spot and stock it with necessities. Kids study better, and with fewer complaints, when they follow a routine.
- Allow free time first. Some kids need to blow off steam after school by exercising or chatting. Many also head straight for a snack or drink. Keep healthy options available that will energize your child for work and play.
- Encourage organization. Productive studying starts with a to-do list. Older elementary school students should make one each day.
- Postpone screen time. Watching TV and playing video games are privileges that often take away from priorities, including homework, reading and socializing. Save all screen time for after homework and studying.
- Pay attention. Homework time is a chance for you to learn about your child. Does she excel at reading? Struggle with multiplication? Have trouble with spelling? Work with her teacher to build on her strengths and overcome challenges.
- Be supportive. Don't do your child's homework for her. But do stay nearby to supervise. It's okay to answer questions and guide your child through problems. But if you feel she needs too much help in an area, talk with her teacher.

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# Four strategies help your child take responsibility for learning

While your child is a student, learning is his job. To do it well, he has to be an active learner--one who takes action instead of just listening. For example, he needs to:



1. Arrive prepared. It's not enough just to show up for school. It's also important to get a good night's sleep, eat a nutritious breakfast and bring necessities.
2. Participate in discussions. Your child should ask questions, make comments and exchange ideas with others. It's especially useful to speak up if something is confusing to him.
3. Stay organized. Help your child create a system for organizing papers, assignments and other materials. Also have him collect a few friends' phone numbers. If he's missing an assignment, he can call someone for it.
4. Be persistent. School can be tough, and doing well takes work. Support your child as he tackles assignments and reviews for tests. Show confidence that his efforts will pay off!

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# Parents still make the difference!

## Middle School – September 2011

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### Screen Time

## Create screen time habits for the school year

If your child is like many middle schoolers, her relaxation time probably includes TV, surfing the Internet, playing video games and texting her friends.

This isn't harmful in itself. But too much can be, especially when your child should be focusing on schoolwork. A good goal is to confine most screen time to the weekends and school holidays.

During the school week:

- No screen time during homework time. Physically take electronics away during homework time. If they are nearby, the temptation is just too great. Your child deserves study breaks, but she should spend them on exercise, spending time with family or having a snack.
- Take your child's phone at bedtime. Many kids send and receive texts late at night.
- Turn off the TV and computer 30 minutes before bedtime. Your middle schooler needs time to unwind.

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### Wellness

## Survive middle school with tips from a school counselor

When it comes to the tools she'll need to succeed academically, be sure to give your child more than just pencils and paper. Send her to class with proper "middle-school survival skills," too!

Such skills are crucial because excelling in middle school involves much more than academics. Among other things, your child will have the best chance of thriving in middle school if she also:

- Is emotionally healthy. Preteens are notoriously filled with self-doubt. And that can make them more likely to give in to peer pressure or attempt to "fit in" at all costs. So help

keep your child emotionally strong. Spend time with her. Encourage healthy friendships and then get to know those friends. Take an interest in the things that interest her. And if you see her genuinely faltering or losing her way, seek professional help.

- Understands her changing body. Never underestimate the impact physical changes can have on your child! A poor self-image can quickly translate into poor grades. Body image is that important to preteens. So talk to your child about the physical changes she'll likely experience during the middle school years. If she knows they're normal, she may feel less abnormal when they happen.

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## Dealing With Tough Issues

# Don't let your middle schooler be a bystander!

Did you know that the bully and the student being bullied are not the only ones involved when bullying happens? Those students who witness incidents of bullying and do nothing are also contributing to bullying. They are bystanders and they aren't meeting their responsibilities to their fellow students and the school.

During an incident of bullying, your child has a responsibility to act. He should:

- Let the bully know that he disapproves of mean behavior. Your child can speak up for the victim. Say, "Stop yelling at him!" or "That's not cool!"
- Put his arm on the victim's shoulder. This simple gesture will show the bully that your child is on the victim's side. It will also help the victim feel safe.
- Walk away. Most bullies enjoy having an audience, so your child shouldn't provide one. If your child doesn't feel safe confronting the bully, he should walk away and tell an adult.
- Refrain from using violence against the bully.
- Refrain from laughing or giggling. That kind of reaction will encourage the bully to continue.
- Persuade the victim to tell an adult. Or offer to tell an adult for the victim.
- Seek out the victim later to offer support and friendship.

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## Homework/Study Skills

# Let your child be responsible for creating homework routines

What's the critical thing to remember about your child's homework? That it's his homework. So help him become more responsible for it by having him develop and follow a regular homework routine!

To develop an effective one, remind your child to:

- Determine when he's at his best. Is he freshest the moment he gets off the school bus? Or does he need an hour to unwind? Have him consider this before deciding when to work each day.
- Avoid distractions. Does he have trouble concentrating? Then he shouldn't study in the same room where someone is watching television. Suggest he find a quiet, private spot for hitting the books.

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