May 22, 2014

Dear Parents:

Teacher Requests. As we think about end of the year procedures, it is a good time to include a reminder about policy concerning special placement requests. The structure and climate of any classroom is very important. When teachers place students in classes, they are charged with creating balanced classrooms. They take into consideration student gender, ability, personality, special needs, and scheduling issues. Though it is always fun to be in the same class as a best friend, it does not always happen. Expanding friendships is an important part of the socializing process in schools. There are occasionally reasons to ask that a child’s special needs be considered when assigning him/her to a class. These are very rare occasions and are not the same as liking a teacher, having a previous friendship with a teacher, or responding to the community dialogue that says one teacher is better than another.

I am asking teachers to follow protocol when they request special placement for a student. Should you, as a parent, want to request special consideration for placement, the request must go to the classroom teacher. A Request Form may be given to you asking for a more in-depth explanation of your request. Completing the form means that further consideration will be given to the request; it does not mean the request is granted. Today is May 22, 2014. Requests for special placement may be made up to but no later than Monday, June 2, 2014.

Camp Storer. On Friday, May 23, fifth grade students will bring home a letter and a volunteer form for parents regarding cabin leaders for the sixth grade Outdoor Education Experience scheduled for September 3-5, 2014. Fifth grade parents are asked to complete the forms and return them to school by Thursday, May 29, 2014.

PTO Thank You. Our PTO wishes to thank all of our students for their participation in and support of our fall fundraiser. The BMX Bike Show, originally scheduled on one of those bitterly cold calamity days, will take place tomorrow afternoon at 1:30 (Friday, May 23). It is a Jeans Day for students.

End of the Year Activities.
As the end of the year approaches there are activities planned for those last days that involve both on-campus and off-campus activities. Each grade level has sent home information and permission forms regarding the activities planned for their grade level. We hope for a “no-rain” day on June 6 when most of our students will be on class picnics or at other outdoor activities.

Graduations.
- Congratulations and our very best wishes will soon be extended to our graduating eighth grade students. Liturgy and awarding of diplomas will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 5. The Eighth Grade Honors’ Assembly is scheduled for Wednesday, June 4, at 1:45 pm.
- Kindergarten. As eighth grade students leave St. Joseph to go on to high school, kindergarten students will celebrate the completion of their first year with us on Thursday, June 5, at 9:00 a.m.
- Thursday, June 5th, is the last day of school for our graduates.

The New School Year.
- The 2014 – 2015 school year begins on Monday, August 18. Faculty and staff orientation and meeting dates are August 14 and 15.
• Enrollment. We have always studied parish data that allowed us to know how many potential students we might have at kindergarten entry level for any given school year within a five year range. That information allowed us to plan for a school that was able to respond to the needs of the parish community for not only more kindergarten space but also for preschool. For the past six or seven years we have seen data that tells us demographics may be changing within our parish. The number of children registered in the parish who are age appropriate for kindergarten has declined each year since 2006. Just as we responded to increased enrollment by adding kindergarten classrooms, last year we needed to respond to the decrease by rightsizing entry level from three classrooms to two. However for the 2014 – 2015, we are returning to three classrooms for kindergarten and also adding a pre-school classroom.

• Faculty Changes. At this time we know of the following changes in faculty for the 2014 – 2015 school year:

**Intervention Specialist, Mrs. Dawn Milner,** will not be returning next year. Mrs. Milner has accepted a position with Lourdes University. As Director of Student Teacher placements and of Clinical Practice, she will continue to work with us as we participate in a Professional Development School Partnership with Lourdes University. I am very grateful for the time she has been with us as an Intervention Specialist, Director of the RtI Program, and classroom teacher and I wish her the best as she moves forward.

**Mrs. Susan Short** will be retiring this year. Mrs. Short teaches Music in the middle school and has been with us for since 2001 and is eager to have more time with her family.

**Mrs. Beth Restivao** will be retiring at the end of this school year. Mrs. Restivo has served St. Joseph School as a third grade Teacher-Minister since 2009. I wish her the very best as she deservedly takes some time for herself and her family.

**Mrs. Linda Olczak** will also be leaving us at the end of this year and plans to spend the extra time she will have with her family. Mrs. Olczak has been a teacher assistant with us since August of 2000 and we wish her the very best.

As previously announced, **Mrs. Carol Lindsley** will also be leaving the third grade as a teacher and assuming a new position with us as Assistant Principal. She is replacing Mrs. Pat Lees who is retiring this year.

As a result of these retirements and changes in position, the following teachers will also change grade levels:

**Kindergarten:** Interviews are now open for a third kindergarten teacher.

**Grade One:** Ms. Sarah Hafner will leave grade one and move to grade three.

**Grade Two:** Mrs. Joan Zunk will leave grade two and move to grade three.

**Grade Three:** Teacher Assistants in grade three will be Mrs. Sandy Yeager (3F), Mrs. Patti Unger (3H), and Mrs. Jennifer Torchia (3Z)

**Kindergarten:** Mrs. Karen Brickner will return to kindergarten as the teacher assistant in the third classroom.

**Memorial Weekend.** I hope you have a chance to enjoy this long weekend and these last few days of the school year.

Sincerely,

Sally A. Koppinger
Principal