

February 7, 2020

Dear St. Helena Families:

Everyone had a great time celebrating Catholic Schools Week! Thank you for all the extras our wonderful volunteers provided - from chaperoning to treating the teachers and staff to breakfast.

We have completed our first week of Winter MAP testing and will finish them next week. Students are committing themselves to the test and doing their best. Many have shown great progress so far this year! This week math teachers were able to work with a trainer from Tierney on how to utilize these winter scores to plan for individualized student instruction.

We will continue to email and post this update until we all get in the practice of checking for the latest news on the school's website.

As always, feel free to reach out with any questions!

Ellen Rian, Ed.S
Principal

Announcements

Conferences - February 18

Please contact Mrs. Stone to sign up for K-4 teacher/parent conferences planned for Tuesday, February 18th. Middle school conferences will be arena-style as in the fall. An interpreter will be available if needed; please let your child's teacher know of the need.

Conferencias - 18 de febrero

Comuníquese con la Sra. Stone para inscribirse en las conferencias de maestros / padres de K-4 planeadas para el martes 18 de febrero. Las conferencias de la escuela intermedia serán de estilo arena como en el otoño. Un intérprete estará disponible si es necesario; informe a la maestra de su hijo sobre la necesidad.

Registration for 2020-21

We are currently taking registrations for the next school year. Registration materials were sent home in folders last week. Please complete the necessary items and send them to the office. Please contact Mrs. Stone if you have any questions or need materials. The deadline to register with TADS and St. Helena is **February 18th**. (Second Notice)

Actualmente estamos tomando inscripciones para el próximo año escolar. Los materiales de registro fueron enviados a casa en carpetas la semana pasada.

Complete los elementos necesarios y envíelos a la oficina. Comuníquese con la Sra. Stone si tiene alguna pregunta o necesita materiales. La fecha límite para registrarse en TADS y St. Helena es el 18 de febrero. (Segunda noticia)

Mr. Woldum Resignation - Letter to the School Community

To the Students, Parents, and Community of St. Helena,

I am writing to you to inform you of a very difficult decision that I have come to make in the previous weeks. I have decided it is in my personal best interest to step down from my position of Physical Education and Health Teacher here at St. Helena. There are a huge number of factors that contributed to this decision but the underlying reason that formed the basis of this decision was, quite simply, I was unhappy. In my life, I always strive to prioritize happiness and joy, and as a health teacher, I encourage my students to do the same. As someone accustomed to a more traditional classroom setting, I found teaching in the gym to be very difficult and overstimulating. For me, it came to a point where I realized I was no longer finding joy in my work, and it was having an effect on my teaching, which led me to be even more unhappy. As I stated before, this has not been an easy decision or process to undertake, but what I have learned, and what I hope others can learn from me, is that if you're not finding joy in your daily life, there's no shame in making a change and trying something different. It is not noble or courageous to continue to do things that make you unhappy. Setting your life's compass towards joy and following it wherever it may lead is the only advice I can give as I prepare to head off to something different. I have loved my time with the students of St. Helena, and even though I will no longer be teaching here, I look forward to staying close to the neighborhood and community. Say "hey" when I see you at Cub, roll down your window on Minnehaha Ave and yell "Mr. Woldum!", who knows, maybe I'll even have king-sized candy bars next Halloween! All of this is to say, thank you for everything you have given me here, particularly the students, I will miss each of you a great deal.

With nothing but LOVE,

TJ Woldum

Physical Education - Interim/Long-term Substitute

Mr. Chris Rian has been hired as our temporary PE teacher. He comes to St. Helena with 15 years of coaching experience with Edina club sports and has experience volunteering with diverse groups of students and adults. He is excited about implementing Minnesota Physical Education standards with our students, and empowering them to get in touch with their inner-athlete!

Grants Awarded

I'm happy to share the news that St. Helena completed the grant process with two foundations and we successfully won both grants! The Catholic Community Foundation has awarded us a generous technology grant to upgrade the media center and classroom technology. In addition, the Carolyn Foundation grant which specifically funds middle school programs will allow us to bring some special, high-interest programming to our middle school students. (Second Notice)

Survey

The school and parish are conducting a survey. It is just a few questions and pertains to our advancement & development work. Thank you in advance for taking the time to share your thoughts with us. We will soon be sharing the results with the community via our Development Update.

There is a link to the survey on the school's website, but if you prefer a paper copy can be provided. (Third Notice)

Award-Winning School

We are excited to announce that St. Helena was named a "**changing-the-odds**" school by the Great Minnesota Schools organization. St. Helena will be recognized in the 4th edition of Minneapolis School Finder, a tool to empower parents from underserved neighborhoods with information on our city's schools meant "to shine a light on schools that are doing well by students of all races, means, and origins."

In the notification, the CEO Jen Stern wrote: "Each year, we identify the schools where students from a low-income background are academically outperforming the Minneapolis Public Schools average (for all students) – and your school is among the 25 schools to do so."

I'd like to add that St. Helena is one of only two Catholic elementary schools being recognized with this award!

We are very proud of our students and all who helped them and our school achieve this recognition. (Third Notice)

Community Reminders

All Parents and Visitors Must Check-In

Please help us follow safe environment practices and monitoring our building by checking-in with the office whenever you come to school outside of drop off/pick up times. This really means everyone: parents, visitors, and former students.

Treat-Free School

In response to a lunch service/nutrition audit last year, we are now a treat-free school. Meaning, students and parents are not allowed to bring in sweets, candy,

pop, etc. for birthdays or other occasions. There are a few exceptions to this, for example, our Christmas and Valentine's Day classroom parties. This also protects our students who have allergies. We suggest making the day special in some other way. Students could bring pencils or stickers for their classmates, parents could come in and read a favorite book, or donate a library book in honor of their child. Thank you for following this policy. (Second Notice)

In addition, delivering food from outside for birthday celebrations or special occasions is strongly discouraged without prior approval. If parents/guardians want to celebrate a student's special day/achievement, please make arrangements for it to take place outside of school hours.

NWEA Winter Testing

Students will be taking their Measures of Academic Progress tests starting on February 3rd - February 13. Please encourage them to do their very best on these important tests. Teachers use them for a variety of purposes, primarily to tailor instruction to individual students' needs. (Second Notice)

Weather-Related School Closing Information

Just a reminder that the policy regarding school closure has changed and we now follow MPS. On snowy or frigid days listen to any local radio or television stations for information about school closings.

If Minneapolis Public Schools are closed, then St. Helena Catholic School will also be closed. You may or may not see a separate notice for St. Helena. (Third Notice)

News & Opportunities

4 His Glory - Camp Registration is Open!

The **TEAM at 4HG** is excited to announce the lineup of our 2020 Summer Camps! Returning **August 4 - 6** is our 2nd annual **[FAITH AND FOOTBALL CAMP!](#)** With an All-Pro lineup of Coaches, Clergy, and Volunteers, this year's camp will be held at St. John's Catholic School in New Brighton, Minnesota. The camp is limited to the first 100 student athletes to sign up online on the **4HG** website. Students must be entering grades **3 - 8** in the upcoming school year. Click [Here](#) to register!

Joining our hallmark camp this year are the **FAITH AND VOLLEYBALL CAMP** and the **FAITH AND ALL SPORTS CAMP**. Led by Coach Ellen

Schafer, the **Faith and Volleyball Camp** will be held **July 13 - 15** at Cretin-Derham Hall High School in St. Paul. Students entering grades 4 - 8 in the upcoming school year are invited to join Coach Schafer in learning skills, practicing their faith, and having fun! Limited to 125 students, please register online on the [4HG website!](#)

Rounding out the ways your children can practice their faith, improve their skills, and enjoy an all-around fun recreational experience, we're proud to announce our **FAITH AND ALL SPORTS CAMP** being held **June 9 - July 30** at Mendakota Park in Mendota Heights. Every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. - Noon, kids will participate in assorted physical activities and games while learning soccer, baseball, and basketball skills. The Faith and All Sports Camp is accepting 200 students who will be entering grades 3 - 8 in the upcoming school year. Register online at [4HG Camp Registration!](#)



MINNESOTA
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL FORUM

PRIVATE AND INDEPENDENT EDUCATION AWARDS



Dear schools, staff, and supporters of Minnesota's independent schools:

MISF is accepting nominations through February 11th for the 2020 Private and Independent Education Awards. All private and independent schools in Minnesota are eligible and encouraged to participate. You may want to consider resubmitting a previous nomination.

Nominations for the following categories are now being accepted:

Behind the Scenes

This award recognizes the quiet and essential work of an individual who supports the school outside the classroom. These individuals go out of their way to make the school environment welcoming, friendly and caring. School staff, coaches, volunteers and other behind the scenes workers may be nominated for this award.

Community Champion

This award celebrates the work of an individual or group that has benefited a school and the community in which the school is located. Board members, donors, and other school supporters may be nominated for this award.

Program

This award highlights an innovative or successful program that supports engagement and academic achievement for the school, students, or faculty.

Leadership

This award recognizes the hard work and dedication of school heads, presidents, principals, superintendents, or executive directors.

Honor Teacher

This award recognizes that special teacher at a school, who has a passion for students and education. They're creative, innovative, fair and compassionate, and they model integrity and excellence. They are involved in their communities, and they achieve exceptional outcomes.

[Click Here to Submit a Nomination](#)

If you would like to preview the questions prior to submitting the nomination, [click here](#).

**NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH.**