



Dear Parents,

September 9, 2020

**Strategic Planning:** We have had a great start to our school year. With 19 school days now completed and all our children still virus free, we feel ready to call on you parents to join our efforts in making St. James the best school it can be.

Last January, February, and early March we had open forum meetings sponsored by the SFA in which we began strategic planning for the school. When COVID-19 struck, we stopped the meetings until which time we would be back in school.

By the grace of God, we are now back and going strong. We would like to pick up where we left off with our strategic planning and hope to finish by this December 2020. Through your input and those of fellow parishioners, we already developed four main pillars of action: 1) Faith and Culture 2) Academics and School Activities 3) Marketing and Communication 4) Finance and Facilities.

Please join us on Tuesday, September 22 at 6:30 pm in the Parish Hall to learn of the goals under each pillar and to help us make these ideals into a reality. Please consider being part of a pillar team. We will use distancing and wear masks in the hall. We will also make the meeting available through Zoom for those not able to attend in person. Those needing Spanish translation should come to the Parish Hall where we will have the headphones once again. I hope as many parents as possible will join us for the evening!

**Transparency and Privacy:** Since we began school on August 13, no student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19. St. James School will report to all school families if any child or staff member tests positive. For the sake of privacy, however, the sick person's name will not be given. So far, no one has been found to have the illness. Some children have had to quarantine due to exposure outside of school, but not one of these children tested positive.

**BIST:** BIST is a behavior intervention program which St. James School adopted this year. Three of the main ideas which children are taught in this program are:

- 1) I can be all right even if I am experiencing difficult emotions (anger, sadness, frustration, listlessness, etc.)
- 2) I can be all right even if someone else is having trouble ( Jimmy is off task, but I can still focus on the teacher.)
- 3) I can do something, even if it is hard or I don't want to do it. (pay attention, do my classwork, line up, etc.)

I think it is a very good program which will strengthen our children's character. The Saints, after all, did very well with all three of the above qualities.

This week the teachers are beginning to use the ICE language to support children who are struggling with their behavior. ICE stand for **I see ...., Can you ...., Even though .....** Examples: "I see you are taking your pen apart. Can you put it down and work on your Math, even though it is hard?" "I see you are running around the gym. Can you line up even though you don't want to?" I've used this language three times recently with children ranging from ages 4-11. All responded, even the one who was just visiting the school and did not know me yet. Perhaps you might want to try using this language with your children at home. The more consistency between home and school, the better!

In the next letter we will talk about the Safe Seat. Children who need more support even after an ICE intervention, go to this place in the classroom where they will be able to reflect and, after some time, process with the teacher.

May you all be safe and blessed, wherever you are seated this week!

In the Heart of Christ the King,

Sister Mary Alma, C.K.

### **First Holy Communion**

Third graders, who are planning to receive their first Holy Communion, should begin receiving on the weekends from September 12- October 11. Please call the parish office at 402 826-2044 to let us know the chosen date for your child's First Holy communion.

### **Confirmation**

Confirmation for those who missed the Sacrament in the spring due to COVID-19 closures is scheduled for Monday, September 14 and Friday, September 18. Please call the parish office at 402 826-2044 to let us know which date your child will attend.

**SCRIP**: SCRIP is a great fundraiser for St. James School and is easy to do on your part. Please consider using SCRIP for all your shopping needs. You purchase gift cards at face value and the school gains a percentage from each of your purchases. We have many vendors in stock for you to select from. We can also order something for you if we don't have it on hand. Orders can be filled in the school office during school hours.

**Tardy/Absence Policy**: To be on time, your child must arrive at school by 8:05 am. If you arrive after 8:10 a.m. please walk your child (K-6) into church; do not have them wait alone in front of school. If you are going to be late or have a sick child, please call the school office to let us know. If we notice that your child is absent and we do not know why we will call you to confirm their absence.

### **Coming Home Today**

- Scrip Order Form
- Tuition Envelopes
- Family directory
- Nebraska Strong Recovery Project Flier