



Dear Parents,

October 7, 2020

There are signs of improvement, growth, and happiness all around St. James School. Academically, we have been working extra hard these opening weeks and it has been worth the effort as you will see by the results listed below.

Kindergarten, first and second grade children were tested using the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) reading tests.

Grade	Skill	Percent of class meeting grade level benchmark	Percent of class still approaching grade level benchmark
Kindergarten	Letter naming	100%	0%
Kindergarten	Letter sounds	75%	25%
First Grade	Letter naming	93%	7%
First Grade	Word segmentation	86%	14%
First Grade	Nonsense word fluency	73%	27%

These are great results for our kindergarten and first grade children. Those who did not meet the benchmark were very close. I am confident that with more time and practice, they will soon be there. Parents, you can help by taking time to read to your children each day. Even just five or ten minutes a day can make a big difference. Choose books you both enjoy and have fun. We have books in Spanish and in English in our Media Center which Mrs. Jochum, our school librarian, will be happy to lend you if you would like to have some for reading at home.

Our second graders are just beginning their second round of testing this week. The first tests were taken back in August just to see where they were after missing last year's fourth quarter. (Ouch! That really hurt but we are making a strong comeback.) Results of the second grade will be sent to parents once we finish. I am looking forward to seeing the outcomes.

There is good news too for our older students in grades 3-6. In these grades, we use the GORT (Grey Oral Reading Test). GORT tests reading fluency and comprehension. In other words, it tests if the children can read passages smoothly and accurately, and if they understand what they read.

Grade	Percent of class with average or above average score for grade level	Percent of class still approaching grade level average
3	100%	0%
4	75%	25%
5	93%	7%
6	86%	14%

A large part of the reason for some children not making the grade level average is that they are new to the English language. With time, they will be right in there with their classmates. With very few exceptions, we saw big improvements between scores taken in August and now in October.

Kudos to our St. James Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom teachers for tremendous teaching. I also want to thank our reading intervention team: Mrs. Shannon Ward, Mrs. Jean Jochum, Mrs. Frederique Sevet-Collier, and Miss Courtney Potter.

**Living Rosary:** Third grade parents are invited to attend the third graders' presentation of the Living Rosary at 2:30 pm this Friday, October 9 in the Church. Please let us know if you plan to attend so we may reserve seats.

**SFA/Strategic Planning Coming Your Way Soon:** Mark your calendar for Tuesday, October 20 at 6:30 pm. Please join us in the parish hall for our SFA Strategic Planning Meeting in which the four pillar teams of 1) Faith and Culture 2) Marketing and Communication 3) Academics and School Activities 4) Finance and Facilities will present the first draft of their projects and ask for your input. We hope to see you there.

**Request from the Academics and Activities Pillar Team:**

The Academics & Activities Strategic Planning Pillar would like to get input from you about activities that you would be interested in for your children. We would also like to see if there is anyone who would like to lead or help with these activities. Please complete the brief survey by clicking the link or scanning the QR code.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/STJ-Parent>



A hard copy is available if needed, but the also posted on the main page of the taking a similar survey at school to gage their give your input and for prayerfully considering talent. If you are considering whether or not you might be able to lead or help with an extracurricular activity, know that the number and length of sessions can be determined by the leader. Being able to provide extracurricular activities is dependent upon finding generous parents, parishioners, and/or community members who can lead them. God bless you!

first option is to take it electronically if possible. It is website. Students in grades 3rd through 6th will be interests, as well. Thank you for taking a moment to how you might be able to share your gifts of time and

**Days off from School** Please remember that there is **no school on Monday, October 12** due to our Diocesan Teacher In-service day and also **no school on Friday, October 16**. Bishop Conley granting a day off to all the Catholic Schools.

**What Would Happen If?** In the short two-week school month of August, Scrip profited St. James \$441.60. This profit came from 24% of the St. James School families who used Scrip for some of their shopping needs. What would happen if the other 76% of our families used Scrip? In two weeks we could conceivably have made \$1,413.12. There is so much more we could do for our school if only people support this ever-so-easy to use program. If you are not yet sure how the Scrip program works, please call the school and we will be happy to explain it to you. It takes little of your time (five minutes or less each time you order) and nothing extra of your money, but it benefits the school greatly.

**First Grade Parents:** The first grade All Saints Parade is on Friday October 30 at 1:15 pm. First grade parents, please let us know if you plan to attend so we can arrange seating.

**Coming Home Today**

Scrip Order Form  
Tuition Envelopes  
COVID-19 at Home Self Screening Magnet

In the Heart of Christ the King,

Sister Mary Alma, C.K.