

Friday, September 4, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Peace to you in Jesus' name. It is with great excitement and anticipation that we welcome your children back to school this coming Tuesday, September 8th, 2020! It is hard to believe that it has been since March 15th that we have had in-person learning at St. Raphael. May the Lord bless and protect your family and our faculty and staff as we begin this school year. These are truly unprecedented times. Please read the following information carefully as it contains vital information for a peaceful start to the school year.

Transportation. As you know, we have been in intense negotiations with the Robbinsdale District 281 to provide our students the bussing that is owed to us per the mandate of the Minnesota Department of Education. I would like to thank each and every one of you who took the time to write to our local representatives to solicit their help in getting our students what they deserve by law. Unfortunately, Robbinsdale District 281 has not yet agreed to provide bussing for our students, nor to reimburse us for a bus company that we would contract. At this time, then, we need to count on parents to transport their own children, or arrange their own carpools. If this proves too difficult for your family, we will provide a Distance Learning Option for your children until such time as bussing is restored. You can find information for the Distance Learning Option on our website: <https://srsmn.org/>

We are in this together! Let us continue to pray, even as we engage the Robbinsdale District 281 to provide the bussing that is owed us as soon as possible!

Enrollment. As of today, we have 100 students enrolled and 26 more in "Pending" status! God is good!

Staffing. The significant number of students enrolled in our 1st and 2nd grades will allow us to divide out what was planned to be a 1st/2nd Combined Classroom. While this is indeed good news, the sad news (for now!) is that we have yet to find the right teacher to teach our 2nd Grade. For now, we will have a temporary substitute teacher begin the school year in the 2nd Grade. More about this teacher to come later. Please spread the word that St. Raphael is looking for a dynamic, loving and faith-filled 2nd Grade teacher!

We are pleased to announce the following new staff at St. Raphael: Mrs. Theresa Rood, Middle School Math and School-wide Math Coach comes to us with decades of experience and will coach all of our math teachers in our Singapore Math curriculum. Mr. Donald Chamberlain returns to St. Raphael as our Middle School Science Teacher; Mr. Chamberlain was instrumental in selecting our current science curriculum which is focused on inquiry based learning (you may recall his experiments with rockets and egg drops from the fire engine!), Mrs. Margaret Pavek joins our staff as our Middle School Religion Teacher and Art Teacher; Mrs. Pavek has decades of experience, a deep appreciation of beauty, and an authentic love for the Lord. Mrs. Perla Enriquez will deliver our Spanish instruction to the Lower Elementary while Mrs. Dull will be the Middle School Spanish teacher; both of these Spanish instructors bring years of experience to our school and are native speakers of the Spanish language.

Staff Transitions: Mrs. Wendy Sosa will transition from her role as Administrative Assistant to the position of Assistant Preschool Director; Mrs. Sosa brings valuable prior experience in this area and will help grow our PK in breadth and depth. Mrs. Holly Teixeira, a very dedicated and effective administrator, will transition from her role as Preschool Teacher Aide to take on the

position of Administrative Assistant. Miss Bria Wunderlich will transition from her role as our 2nd Grade teacher to be the teacher of our 4th/5th Multiage Classroom.

Along with our existing staff, this is truly a dynamic, dedicated, loving, and faith-filled team that is focused and ready to help your child(ren) grow into the very best version of themselves that the Lord intends!

Grants and Donors. It should encourage your heart, as it does mine, to know that very generous donors have already contributed to the success of St. Raphael Catholic School and to the education and formation of your child(ren) for this year. In addition to the very generous scholarships provided annually by the Aim Higher Foundation, and the Mr J Scholarship Fund, and the Catholic Community Foundation, the following are new grants and donations that have come to our beloved school since May:

- Schulze Family Foundation (SFF) Summer Matching Grant - SRS Raised \$35,000, SFF matched with \$35,000 for scholarships, recruitment, and retention
- CSCOE Marketing Grant - \$8,400 (with another potential \$4,000) marketing, retaining existing families, and increasing enrollment
- Catholic Community Foundation Educational Impact Grant - \$9,000 for COVID-related expenses
- CSCOE Tech Grant - \$10,000 for expenses related to Distance Learning
- Relevant Radio advertisements paid for by a generous donation of \$3,000
- Still Pending: Schulze Family Foundation Fall Matching Grant - SRS committed to raising \$15,000, with SFF providing a matching \$15,000. SRS desires to building two outdoor classrooms and enhancing COVID-related supplies and needs with remainder.
- \$5,000 generously donated to provide the Faculty and Staff an overnight retreat with two national retreat directors

Please pray for our generous benefactors!

COVID Preparedness Policies and Procedures. Please be assured that we will work diligently to comply with all of the safety procedures that we have carefully planned to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Please do your part to help with this all-important effort. Thank you to all of you who signed the COVID Back to School Agreement at the Back to School Night on August 25, 2020. If you have not yet signed this document, please do so immediately. We must be in this together. A few reminders: please make sure that you take the temperature of your child(ren) at home before they come to school, especially if they present any symptoms of ill health; please make sure your child(ren) don their mask before leaving the car at morning drop-off; please make sure that your child(ren) brings their water bottle to school. Please have your child(ren) **remain in the car** at morning Drop Off until a school staff member takes the temperature of your child(ren). (Please find a reminder of our directions for Morning Drop Off and Afternoon Pick Up traffic flow below.)

Pulling together, we can make this one of the best years St. Raphael Catholic School has ever had!

Thank you for the privilege of serving as the Principal of this wonderful school. As always, feel free to call, email, or set an appointment with me to talk about any concerns or questions you might have.

It's a great day to be a Saint!

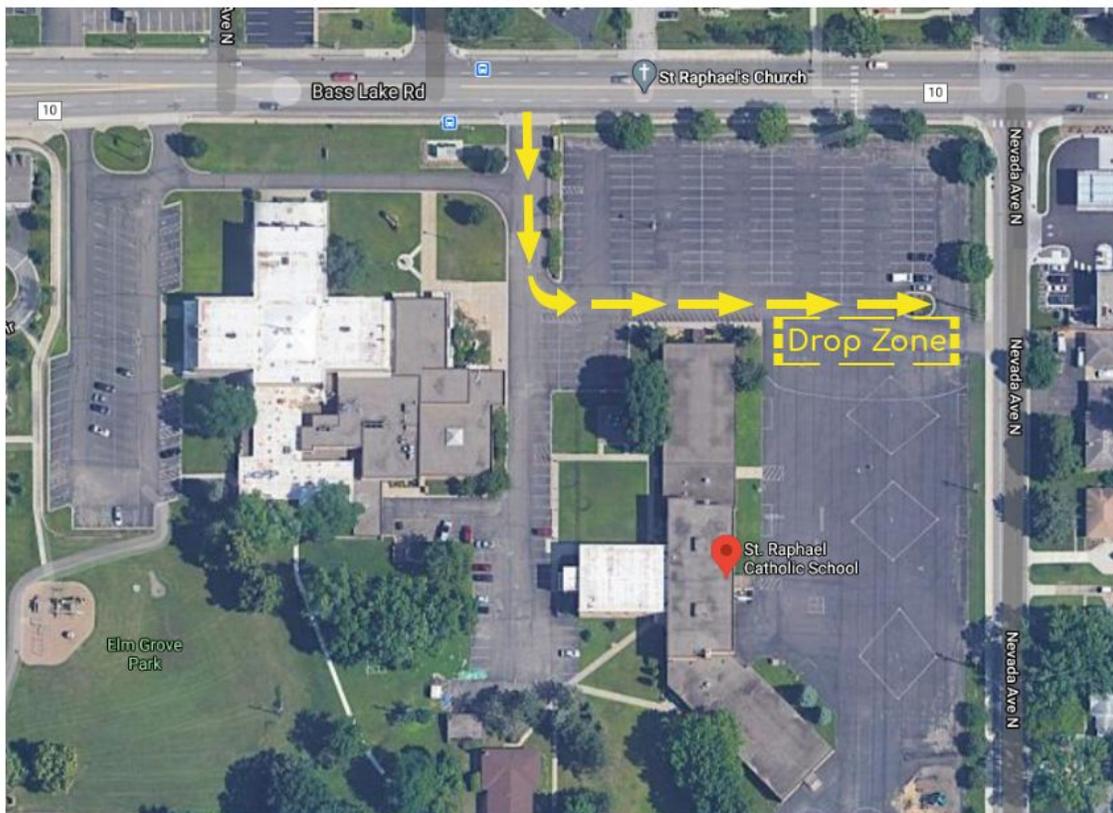
Sincerely yours in Christ,
Paul Dull

Morning Drop Off Procedure

When dropping your student(s) off in the morning, please enter the St. Raphael parking lot via Bass Lake Road, between the church and the school. Turn left immediately and pull up in front of the north side of the school (primary wing) and proceed to the green men traffic signals. You are asked to wait in your vehicle until a staff member takes the temperature of your child or children at the vehicle window. Exit the parking lot onto Nevada.



SRS Morning Car Line Drop-off Route



Afternoon Pick Up Procedure

When picking up your student(s) at the end of the day, please enter the parking lot from Nevada Avenue North, turning right immediately after entering. Follow the fence line to the west end of the parking lot, then turn left to pull up in front of the north side of the school (primary wing). You are asked to remain in your vehicle while staff directs your child to you. Please exit via Nevada Avenue North.



SRS Afternoon Car Line Pick-up Route

