



Principal's Post

December 16, 2022

Good afternoon St. Margaret School families,

We were thrilled to have our ES Christmas programs today! The students did such a wonderful job! They worked so hard rehearsing and it certainly put us all in the Christmas spirit! We are looking forward to our Preschool nativity plays and Middle School songs next week!

Thank you to all those who attended our first SMS Santa's Village last week. It was a wonderful evening of many smiles and lots of Christmas spirit! We raised almost \$600 for parish outreach from the bake sale. God bless you for your generosity!

St. Margaret Parish Journey to Bethlehem this Sunday, December 18, is an opportunity this holiday season for us to be reminded of the true story and meaning of Christmas through Scripture, Song, Acting and Fellowship. Please see the [attached](#) flyer from the parish for more information.

Tuesday, December 20 - Ugly Christmas Sweater Day (with regular uniforms)

Middle School students will be dropped off to the Elementary School gym at 7:30am.

All students will attend 8:30am Mass, visit with their prayer partners and participate in activities throughout the morning.

Early dismissal - Preschool 11:20AM, Middle School 11:45AM, Kindergarten 12:00PM, Grades 1-5 12:05PM

December 21 - January 2 - Merry Christmas! School closed for Christmas break!

We hope you enjoy this time with your children and we look forward to the blessings of the new year!

Tuesday, January 3 - school reopens - happy new year!

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

Trimester 2 and 3 Expectations - Please refer to the **attached** parent letter that was sent on 12/1 regarding Trimester 2 and 3 expectations.

From the Health Suite- As cold and flu season are upon us please follow our health suite policies to ensure the health and safety of our students. All illness related absences need to be documented by emailing the homeroom teacher as well as the office secretary and the nurse on each campus. Any student absent for 3 days or more requires a doctor's note to return to school. Our nurses will be in communication with families with illness related absences. Thank you for your support.

Elementary School:

Mrs. Currey (scurrey@smsch.org) and Mrs. Piechocki (kpiechocki@smsch.org)

Middle School:

Mrs. Schafer (pschfer@smsch.org) and Mrs. Zankowitz (lzankowitz@smsch.org)

Hot Lunch The St. Margaret School hot lunch program is now open for orders! Hot lunch service will begin on Tuesday, October 25th. Hot lunches will again be ordered through the Hot Lunch online system: <https://stmargaret.h1.hotlunchonline.net> Order deadlines are one week prior to the hot lunch scheduled. In other words, orders can be placed 7 days prior to any scheduled lunch. If you have any questions or difficulty setting up your account or ordering process, please feel free to contact stmargarethotlunch@gmail.com

Tuition Assistance - Applications for Saint Margaret Parish tuition assistance for the 2023-2024 academic year are now open.

Families who currently receive a parish tuition grant must reapply annually. Renewals are NOT automatic.

Interested families may use the link for SSS School and Student Services <https://www.solutionsbysss.com/> and click the “SSS for FAMILIES” box.

Applications Open: November 11, 2022

Last date to Apply: January 6, 2023 (application must be completed)

2021 tax information will be used

Saint Margaret Parish provides tuition assistance to eligible families for children attending our parish school from preschool through Grade 8. Families registered AND active in Saint Margaret Parish are eligible to apply for tuition grants. The parish defines “active families” as those that are part of this worshipping community by regularly attending Mass at Saint Margaret Parish. We do not provide tuition assistance to families registered and/or active in another parish, or for students attending other schools.

There is an online application to complete, and documents to review, as well as financial information to upload. Please follow these steps:

1. Apply online at <https://www.solutionsbysss.com/>

- At the top choose “Logins” then choose “For families”.
- Follow the instructions on the SSS website.
- Throughout the application, there are explanatory drop-down boxes
- If you have questions, you may contact SSS for assistance at (800)-344-8328.
- Please make sure that you fill out and sign the “Applicant’s Acknowledgement and Checklist.” Your application will not be considered complete without it.
- SSS processes applications within a few days and makes a recommendation called “Expected Family Contribution”. The Parish Tuition Assistance Committee uses this, as well as Mass attendance, as a baseline for making its eligibility and award determinations.
- Please provide all explanations requested on the SSS application, and use the final comments area to describe any extraordinary circumstances your family has experienced in the last three years.
- Note that you will need to provide additional information if you own a business or farm.

2. Your application will be considered complete when SSS provides the Expected Family Contribution AND when we receive all required documentation. The Tuition Assistance Committee will review your application and notify you of its decision after the application process has closed

AOB Tuition Assistance - The Archdiocese of Baltimore is now accepting applications for Tuition Assistance Grants for the 23/24 academic year. FACTS, an independent third party, helps the Archdiocese objectively assess what a family is able to contribute to its student(s) educational expenses. Awards do not need to be repaid, but an application is required each academic year. There is no automatic renewal process. Completed applications must be received no later than February 28th in order to be considered for a tuition grant.

Please use the link for St. Margaret School’s page

<https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3QDJ0> and apply early for maximum consideration.

Uniforms - Turtlenecks at the ES with the embroidered logo are permitted only this year as they are being phased out. Plain turtlenecks are not permitted. Vests at the MS for girls are permitted this year as well as they are phased out. Neither option will be permitted next school year. Jackets and coats are permitted outside but are not to be worn inside the buildings during school hours. Jackets and non-SMS sweatshirts will not be worn during Mass. Showing pride in our SMS uniforms is important. Please be sure your child is following the uniform (including hair) guidelines in our handbook. Uniform slips will be given for not following the school uniform guidelines. ***Thank you for your support with our school procedures!*** Parent/Student Handbook link:

<https://smsch.org/assets/imgs/featured/Handbook-St.-Margaret-School-2022-2023.pdf>

Lunch Duty PreK 4 - Grade 5 - Please be sure to sign up to help as a lunch helper volunteer! All volunteers in classrooms need to be Virtus compliant.

ES Parking Concerns - ES parents, please do not park in the Office of Aging parking lot or in the reserved areas on Wright St. We have received calls from the Office of Aging as well as from the Sheriff's office. We have been informed that effective immediately, you will be ticketed if you are parked or stopped in the areas designated for the Office of Aging. Please cooperate with these parking procedures as we do not want to see our school families receiving citations.

Please do not park in the handicap parking spaces during the school day. Please also remember not to park or stop at the yellow curb. Parents are not permitted to pull into the lane between the white building and the garage during school hours (8:30-3:00pm) off of Hickory Avenue. Preschool students are dropped off at this location in the morning (8:05-8:30am), however the cones that block the entrance from Hickory Avenue should remain in place to prevent cars from entering. During the school day students walk between buildings. Thank you for your cooperation!

Middle School Arrival and Dismissal There are to be NO LEFT TURNS from our middle school parking lot during arrival or dismissal. The no left turn sign is posted. Those who are continuing to disregard this procedure are causing safety issues for our school community. Please assist us by following our school safety guidelines. Thank you.

We love our SMS Grandparents! Our grandparents are special and we want to make sure we include them when we share videos and send seasonal mailings. Please use [this form](#) and share their contact information with us. Thank you!

Vacations - Per the school handbook - absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. Missed work and assignments may only be obtained upon return.

Late Pick Up Reminders - Beginning October 3rd, a fee will be charged for the After School Care of any child remaining more than 15 minutes after dismissal (Starting at 2:50pm at the MS and 3:15pm at the ES). Parents will be charged \$5.00 for the first 15 minutes of care and an additional \$5.00 for every five minutes after that. A flat fee of \$5.00 will be levied in an emergency situation. More instructions are on the form. Parents are receiving this information as well in the Principal Post.

Volunteer Compliance VIRTUS - Please review the VIRTUS requirements for volunteering. All those who wish to volunteer in our school must be appropriately screened and provide three written references to the school. Parents may not volunteer without completing this mandatory screening. <https://smsch.org/giving/volunteer/virtus>

Have a wonderful weekend!

Blessings,
Mrs. Anna Shanahan
Principal