

May 27, 2009

END OF YEAR ATTACHMENTS & NOTES

The following items are attached:

Special Edition Pieces Honorable Mention (Annual Report Summary)

Revised 2009-2010 School Calendar

End of Year Teacher Surveys

In the past, we have mailed a survey for each of your children's teachers to evaluate their effectiveness as your child's teacher. The teachers will compile your input from the survey with that of the other parents to help them set professional goals for the future. **This year, we have placed the survey online.** It can be found on our website at: www.stthomasgr.org/survey. **Please** take a moment to complete this survey **by the last day of school**, June 5, 2009.

Closing School Mass Reminder

We'd like to thank all of our spring activity chairs, coaches and volunteers. We'd also like to thank all of you who had yearlong projects and are, or will be, wrapping them up soon. Your time, talents, and commitments have made another school year successful!

All of our volunteers (VIPs) are important to us! **You are invited to attend the last school Mass to be celebrated in your honor on Friday, June 5, at 9:55 a.m.**

Field Day Thank You

Thank you to all who helped with Field Day! VIP's: Ellen Mikolay, Rebecca Sheil, and Lisa Wolf. An extra special thank you to Denise Deveau and Stephanie LaVoie who stepped up to help in the afternoon - The day would not have been a success without you. The Eighth grade volunteers worked so hard and did a fantastic job. Teachers and aides thank you for your patience and cooperation. Last but not least a BIG thank you to Ashley Grothe (gym teacher) for all her hard work! *Terry Rott* Thank you, too Terry, for all your hard work for Field Day!! – Angela Yondo

HOT LUNCH NOTICE

Hello Everyone!!

As another school year comes to an end, so must all **hot lunch accounts** come to zero! Please make sure your account is **paid in full by June 5**. Most everyone should be receiving weekly emails with account balances. If you have not received this information recently, please contact me. Any account with a positive balance will carry over to next year. If you have any questions regarding your balance, or payment, feel free to email me at: lunchadmin@stthomasgr.org or call me at: 874-5680. Thank you all for your cooperation! Have a great summer! Shannon Rodgers

Hot Lunch Menu Changes ~Parents as the year comes to an end we ask students to carefully listen to announcements for daily menu changes!

Save the date

Catholic Central Football Community Day – Aug 22 at the CAT. Watch for more detailed information in the Church bulletin over the summer.

Correction to Last Pieces: Congratulations to our Newly Confirmed! We spelled Elizabeth Katherine Marie **Tietema** incorrectly.



THE PEACEMAKER ... PIECES

Saint Thomas School community prepares children for life in a respectful and supportive environment by providing a Dynamic Education Centered in Christ.

Honorable Mentions Annual Report Summary

Dynamic Education Centered in Christ



- ◆ Faith is First
- ◆ Academics are Rigorous
- ◆ Climate is Peaceful and Disciplined
- ◆ Parents are Empowered
- ◆ Technology is Optimized
- ◆ Leaders are Formed

School Theme

Our school theme for this year has been “**Encounter the Living God**”. We have begun each day with the “Encounter the Living God” prayer as a reminder to look for Our Living God in our daily lives, especially here at St. Thomas. Approximately 300 times this year students have been recognized, with their picture in the Pieces, because we have encountered the Living God through them. Our students recorded a professional CD with this year’s theme song- “You Are the Life Inside Me”.

Prayer and Sacraments

- Each day our staff and students begin the day with a **school-wide prayer**. Each student in grades 3-8 writes a prayer to share over the P.A.
- Once per week the school community gathers to celebrate **Mass**. Students in grades P-1 gather for prayer services. Students are active in the preparation and celebration as music ministers, lectors, cantors, servers, ushers, and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist. During the course of one year alone there are over 650 opportunities for liturgical ministers during school Mass.
- Students in each class gather with Fr. Jim to celebrate the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** during the seasons of Advent and Lent.
- First Friday Holy Hour **Eucharistic Adoration**: 20-30 1st-8th graders per month have chosen to give up recess in order to spend this quiet time before the Lord in prayer.
- 27 2nd graders received their **First Holy Communion** this year, and 29 8th graders received the sacrament of **Confirmation** in May.
- During **Holy Days** at St. Thomas students take a break from their normal academic work to focus on worship, service, and recreation.
- **The Teachers** have been meeting the last Thursday of each month to attend 7:30 AM Mass together before beginning their school day.



Visiting Religious

This spring, through a program with Care Resources we have had the pleasure of hosting retired Dominican sisters from Marywood. The sisters joined our students on several occasions at lunchtime for fun and friendship.



School Data

St. Thomas School is **fully accredited** through the Michigan Non-public Schools Accrediting Association (MNSAA), and in 2007 was named a “School of Distinction.”



We have a total **enrollment** of **338** students, with an average class size of 21 students. 12% of our students represent minority groups, and 90% of our families are parish members.

Academic Data

When taking the **Iowa Test of Basic Skills**, on average, St. Thomas students perform better than approximately 78% *of other Catholic, Christian, and public school students across the nation (*compared to 75% Diocesan Schools average). On average 40% of **St. Thomas Alumni** currently attending High School qualify for the Honor Roll. Also, for the 3rd Quarter this year, **33% of the freshman** on the Honor Roll at Catholic Central **are 2008 St. Thomas Graduates!**

After School Enrichment Opportunities

This year we introduced several offerings for our students for participation after school hours. Two special needs students took part in the offering of Religious Education for those with educational needs. Over 15 students participated in the Tech Club, producing videos, animation, and working with programming/robotics. 16 girls in grades three and four participated in Girls on the Run, ultimately running in a 5K with 800 other Girls on the Run in Kent County.



Resource Program: This program is in its 3rd year and has grown even more. Our Resource Teacher position was increased to 85% time, and added large sensory equipment for gross motor activities. This program has reached more than 50 students.

Enrichment Program: This program has been greatly enhanced this year with the addition of a part time AT (Academically Talented) Enrichment teacher. Two days per week approximately 35 AT students in grades 3-8 participate in enrichment lessons that are integrated with the classroom curriculums. All students were welcomed to participate in the *Spelling Bee*, and the *Math League Challenge*. The enrichment teacher is available as well for consult with the classroom teachers in matters of enrichment and differentiation. We are currently working on ways to expand this vital program.



In conjunction with Aquinas College, we will be offering a “College for Kids” summer program which offers several enriching classes both here at St. Thomas and on the campus at Aquinas.

Student Council

The Student Council presented the 6th Annual **Elizabeth Ann Seton Award** to Mr. Dave Faber for his generous dedication to Catholic education. Mr. Faber has been the principal for 16 years here at St. Thomas.

Our 5th Annual **Cha-Ching Challenge for Charity** was both exciting and helpful. \$1345 was collected and donated to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.



It was a **historical year** for the Student Council. They set out to write a constitution to govern the council's actions at the beginning of the year. After much work, discussion, deliberation and nine months of meetings the St. Thomas the Apostle Student Council Constitution was signed into action on May 8, 2009. Congratulations!

Curriculum Highlights

In 2008 teachers participated in a diocesan curriculum institute to update the **Social Studies curriculum**. In the fall we will begin to use the new textbooks and new curriculum.

In addition to regular Spanish instruction, a **Spanish Phrase of the Week** has continued to assist the students and teachers with Spanish Language usage during the course of their daily life here at school. A 3rd weekly Spanish class has been added for the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders.



The **Multicultural and Diversity and Inclusion (MCDI)** committee sponsored a Peacemaker of the Month bulletin board in the first floor hallway of the school. This display featured individuals from around the world who are known for promoting peace and justice in our world.

The **School Improvement Team** and the **Enrichment Committee** have spent much time this year focusing on the area of **Differentiation of Instruction** in order to meet the needs of all students.

Technology

Projectors and **tablet PCs** have now been installed in all home-room classrooms.

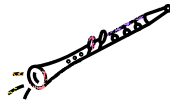


Student Response Systems (clickers) have been in use this year in our fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

New **LightSPEED sound amplification systems** have been installed in nine of our classrooms.

Fifth Grade Band Experience

Each fifth grade student was able to test and select an instrument to play in the Partner Schools Band program. This whole class band experience includes two band sessions a week with the band instructor, as well as a band/music class with Mrs. Proulx. Both instructors have seen good musical progress and growth in student confidence.



Budget

This year's **Parish Investment** to the school was \$607,656.00, with Total School Expenses of \$1,390,548.

Tuition assistance was received by 61 families through the St. Thomas Educational Foundation, Tuition Angel Program, Diocesan Tuition Assistance Awards. For the first time ever, **we were able to meet 100% of the need** for tuition assistance.

Our Annual Auction was a **tremendous** success, earning approximately \$40,200.

Special Weeks

Specific focus and unique educational opportunities are provided during our **Vocations Week, Celebrate Life Week, Catholic School's Week, Teacher Appreciation Week, and Diversity Week**. Parent volunteers, the faculty and staff all contribute to unique curriculum offerings during these special weeks.

Seventh Grade Leadership Retreat

Taking place May 21 and 22 at beautiful Camp Blodgett, our goal for the retreat is to promote **leadership** and **unity** among the 7th graders just prior to becoming our new 8th grade leaders. They will be anointed for leadership by the 8th graders at Mass on May 29th.



Reading with the Stars

(St. Thomas the Apostle Reading Students)

Reading with the STARS is a program that pairs reading students with adult listeners. Parents, grandparents, and other community volunteers, including participants of Care Resources (an adult day care center) and Holland Home listen to students a ½ hour one to four times per week. The students visit Care Resources, but the other volunteers come into the school. Aquinas College has been approached for next year, hoping to make this a truly intergenerational project. Additionally, we invite local "stars", like White-caps baseball players, to visit our school to motivate all students to read.



Classroom Highlights

Preschool 3 and 4 year olds created wonderful Advent Boxes. Lower elementary students observed chicks hatching from eggs in our lower level hallway.

The Zoo Phonics program has begun with enthusiasm in the Kindergarten and lower elementary classrooms.

Third graders presented a Famous Americans Wax Museum

The fifth graders visit Holland Home on the 1st Friday of each month to pray the Rosary.

The sixth grade sang for two naturalization ceremonies at the Ford Museum.

To study force and motion, the seventh graders built trebuchets to compete for distance and accuracy.

The Resource Program has made great use of its new sensory equipment received through the generosity of the AMBUCS.

Sports

93% of our 5th—8th graders represented St. Thomas through good sportsmanship, competing well, best efforts, and teamwork in **13 sports offerings** this year.



Congratulations to:

7th Grade Volleyball 2nd Place City Tournament

7/8 Cross Country Invitational Champs

7th Grade Girl's Basketball 3rd Place City Championship

8th gr. Girls' Basketball City Champs

7/8 Girl's Soccer 2nd Place City Tournament

Track: City Champions in Sr. Boy's Pole Vault, Jr. Girl's Pole Vault, Sr. Boy's 800 Relay, Sr. Girl's Shot Put

After-School Program

As an **important ministry** for our school community, we provided care for full time, and part time K-6 students. Students participated in many enjoyable and enriching activities in the context of a nurturing community setting.



St. Thomas School Calendar ~ 2009-2010

(Revised 5/27/2009)

First Quarter/First Semester ~ 40 student days/250 hours

August

- 24 Teacher Retreat
- 25-27 Teacher In-service
- 26 Popsicles in the Park
- 26 Junior High Parent Meeting ~ 7pm
- 31 Teacher In-Service

September

- 1 First Full Day (Grs. 1-8)
AM 3-yr-old Open House ~ 9-10 a.m.
AM Kindergarten Open House ~ 9-10 a.m.
PM Kindergarten Open House ~ 1-2 p.m.
- 2 First Day of Kindergarten
AM 4-yr-old Preschool Open House ~ 9-10 a.m.
PM 4-yr-old Preschool Open House ~ 1-2 p.m.
- 3 First Day of 3-yr-old Preschool
- 4 NO SCHOOL—Labor Day Vacation
- 7 NO SCHOOL—Labor Day
- 9 First Day 4-yr-old Preschool
- 16 Parent Meeting/Family Open House ~ 7 p.m.

October

- 2 11 AM dismissal/Teacher In-Service
- TBD 6 p.m. School Carnival
- TBD Celebrate Life Week begins
- 29 No School/MANS Conference
- 30 No School/MANS Conference
- 30 End of First Quarter

Second Quarter ~ 44 student days/274.5 hours

November

- 2 ITBS Testing begins
- 3 Evening Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 5 11 a.m. Dismissal –Parent/Teacher Conferences
(afternoon and evening) Report Cards Home
- 6 11 a.m. Dismissal
- 25-27 Thanksgiving Vacation (No After-school Program)

December

- TBD Christmas Vespers ~ 7 p.m.
- 8 Immaculate Conception (*Celebration thru Worship and Service*)
- 23-31 Christmas Vacation

January

- 1 Christmas Vacation
- 4 School Resumes
- TBD Vocations Week
- 15 End of Second Quarter
- 18 No School—Teacher In-Service
- TBD 7:00 p.m. Variety Show
- 22 Report Cards Home
- 25 Catholic Schools Week

Third Quarter/Second Semester ~ 42 student days/267 hours

February

- TBD Reconciliation Celebration ~ 7:00 p.m.
- 16 Evening Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 17 Ash Wednesday
- 18 11:00 a.m. Dismissal Parent/Teacher Conferences
(afternoon and evening)
- 19 No School – Mid-Winter Break
- 22 No School – Teacher In-Service

March

- TBD Diversity Week begins
- 3 Kindergarten/Preschool Roundup Info Session ~ 9 a.m.
Kindergarten/Preschool Roundup Info Session ~ 6:30 p.m.
No K-AM, or P4 AM
- 19 Third Quarter Ends
- TBD ChaChing Challenge (*Student Council*)
- 26 Report Cards Home

Fourth Quarter ~ 47 student days/296 hours

April

- 1 No School/Holy Thursday
- 2 No School/Good Friday
- 4 Easter
- 5-9 Spring Break
- 12 School Resumes
- TBD First Holy Eucharist (*1st Group*) ~ 3:00 p.m.

May

- TBD First Holy Eucharist (*2nd Group*) ~ 3:00 p.m.
- 3 Teacher Appreciation Week begins
- 5 May Crowning 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Spring Program ~ 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- 20-21 7th Grade Retreat at Camp Blodgett
- TBD Sacrament of Confirmation 8th Grade 7:00 p.m.
- 28 Last Day for 8th Grade
- 31 No School – Memorial Day (No Afterschool Program)

June

- 2 Last Day for 4-yr-old Preschool
8th Grade Graduation ~ 7 p.m.
- 3 Last Day for 3-yr-old Preschool & Kindergarten
- 4 11 a.m. Dismissal ~ Last Day of School (Grs 1-7)

AUGUST

M	T	W	TH	F
I	I	I	I	
I				

SEPTEMBER

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	X*
X*	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

OCTOBER

M	T	W	TH	F
				1 /
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	X*	X*

NOVEMBER

M	T	W	TH	F
2	C	4	/C	/C
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	X*	X*	X*
30				

DECEMBER

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	H	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	X*	X*	X*
X*	X*	X*		

JANUARY

M	T	W	TH	F
				X*
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
I*	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

FEBRUARY

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	C	17	/C	X*
I*	23	24	25	26

MARCH

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

APRIL

M	T	W	TH	F
			X*	X*
X*	X*	X*	X*	X*
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

MAY

M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
X*				

JUNE

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	/*

I = Teacher In-service /= ½ Day X = NO School C = Conferences H = Holy Day * = No Afterschool Program E=2:15 Early Dismissal

Daily Schedule – Grades 1-8

8:00 a.m.	School Begins
11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Lunch/Recess (Grs. 1-5)
11:42 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Lunch/Recess (Grs. 6-8)
3:15 p.m.	School Dismissal

Daily Schedule – Preschool/Kindergarten

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Morning Session
12:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	Afternoon Session