

## From Mrs. Tilleman's Desk- Special Edition

### Welcome to the Heart of Our School- Sharing all about St. Patrick School!

At St. Patrick School, we are more than just a place of learning; we are a family. Our mission is to provide a nurturing environment where every student is known by name and supported in their spiritual, academic, and social growth. This month, we want to highlight some of the incredible programs and philosophies that make our school a special place for your children.

### Catholic Education

At St. Patrick School, our Catholic faith is at the **heart** of everything we do. Catholic education is more than academic learning—it is about nurturing the whole child: spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. We strive to create a faith-filled environment where students are encouraged to grow in their relationship with God while developing the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become compassionate and responsible members of society. Our faith shapes who we are as a school community and guides the way we learn, lead, and care for one another. Through prayer, faith celebrations, service opportunities, and daily acts of kindness, students are encouraged to live out the teachings of Jesus Christ in meaningful ways.

At St. Patrick School, we believe every child is a gift from God and is created with unique talents and purpose. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive community where students feel valued, supported, and inspired to “Learn to Love” through faith, respect, and service to others. A proud part of our Catholic Faith is the Liturgical Celebrations we celebrate throughout the year. You are welcome to attend any one of these events!

- **Nom'maap'pinnaan** (Our Home, Our Sacred Place): Every Monday or first day of the week we begin with our Assembly called Nom'maap'pinnaan where we hear the word of the Lord and prepare ourselves for the week at school.
- **School Mass:** Throughout the year students attend Mass at St. Augustine Church or in the gathering space of our school.
- **Prayer Services and Liturgies:** These are planned to coincide with our liturgical year where we, as a community, celebrate the richness of our faith. These services are planned in such a way that our students actively participate and lead our school.

### Why We Believe in Multiage Classrooms

At St. Patrick School, we intentionally use a multiage learning model that brings together students from different grade levels (Grade 1, Grades 2/3 and Grades 4/5) to create a collaborative and supportive learning community. This approach recognizes that children learn and grow at different rates and allows us to better meet their academic, social, and emotional needs.

Some of the benefits of this approach:

- **Peer Mentorship:** Older students develop leadership and empathy by mentoring younger peers, while younger students are inspired by the academic and social models of their older classmates.
- **Personalized Pacing:** Research suggests that multiage classrooms reduces grade-level competition. Students can progress at their own developmental pace—soaring ahead in strengths or taking extra time where needed



- **Social-Emotional Growth:** Studies consistently show that students in multiage settings develop stronger collaborative skills, higher self-esteem, and more positive attitudes toward school compared to traditional single-grade classrooms.
- **The Relationship Advantage:** By staying with the same teacher for longer periods, a deeper bond is formed, allowing teachers to truly understand each child's unique learning style.
- **Consistency and Stability:** A multiage model provides greater consistency within classrooms, allowing for more stable learning environments as student enrollment numbers change from year to year

### Fueling Our Minds: The Breakfast Program

We believe that no child can learn on an empty stomach. We are proud to offer a Nutritious Breakfast Program to ALL students every morning. The doors open for the breakfast program at 8:10 am in the gathering space. Every student is welcome to come get breakfast. It is a barrier-free program designed to ensure every student starts their day with the energy they need to succeed. Special thanks to our Breakfast Program Team and the Healthy Heroes initiative for keeping our students fueled and ready to learn!

### Extra-Curriculars

Life at St. Patrick extends far beyond the bell! We are committed to developing well-rounded students through our various clubs and teams:

- **Thunder Athletics:** Our Grade 4 and 5 students are invited to join our after-school sports program. It's a fantastic way to build teamwork, fitness, and school spirit.
- **The Arts:** For our creative souls, we offer Choir and Drama Club, providing students with the opportunity to find their voice and shine on stage.
- **Garden Club:** Students can get their hands dirty and learn about nature firsthand! Our Garden Club is perfect for those who want to help our school bloom while learning about sustainability and teamwork.
- **Fun Literacy Programs:** We make reading a community event! Students can participate in One Book, One Community to share a reading experience with their peers, or join the excitement of May Madness Books, where favorite titles go head-to-head in a bracket-style tournament to crown a literary champion.

### Supporting Every Child: FSCL & ISSP

We are thrilled to have a full-time Family School Community Liaison (FSCL) on-site, made possible through the Integrated School Support Program (ISSP) grant.

Our FSCL works closely with students and families to provide social and emotional support, connect families with community resources, and ensure that every child feels safe, cared for, and ready to learn. Whether it's a listening ear or navigating a difficult season, our FSCL is here for you.

This newsletter offers just a small glimpse into the many things that make St. Patrick School such a special and vibrant place to learn, grow, and belong. From our strong faith foundation and supportive multiage classrooms to the meaningful relationships and opportunities we provide for students, we are proud of the caring community we continue to build together.

We value the partnership between home and school and believe that open communication is essential to student success. If you ever have any questions, concerns, or simply wish to connect, please know that my door is always open. Thank you for being an important part of the St. Patrick School community.

Warm regards,

Mrs. Mary Tilleman

Principal, St. Patrick Elementary School

"Learning to Love & Loving to Learn"



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