



A Word From Our Principal

Mastery or Grade - What Is More Important?

What is the goal of our school in teaching your child? Is it for your child to master the necessary information to help them be able to build on these skills in his/her future education? Or is it to always receive the “A” on everything they do? This is a question that we discuss and bring back regularly as a faculty.

At St. John Neumann Catholic School, our goal is for your child to master the material presented to them at the level that would challenge them. It would be very easy for all of the children to learn everything the same - at the same time, at the same pace. This is not what our school is trying to achieve. Yes, of course we want each child to feel successful, but we also want them to learn that they have to work for that success.

With the use of differentiated instruction (D.I.), we are preassessing each child on the material that is going to be presented in each class, and what is expected to be mastered for that particular unit. How can we help the children who need some reinforcement of the basic material while challenging the children who already know the majority of it? That is what DI is all about, and we are doing it VERY WELL!

Now it is time for you, as the parent, to ask yourself - would you rather your child receive an “A” with little work involved (because they already know the material) or do you want your child to be challenged and learn new material? There have been a few parents who have questioned why their child is now coming home with “B’s” when the “A’s” have always been easy. If we are challenging your child, he/she may come home with some “B’s” and having to work harder.

In life, you want your child to learn that they have to work to achieve success, it does not come easy. We do not want to give them the false impression that everything comes to you with little or no work. Also, to receive “A’s” every day in everything they do is putting a lot of pressure on that child (or adult, for that matter). Everyone has a bad day every once in a while. If your child comes home with a paper on which they have received a poor grade, sit down with them and calmly talk to them about it. Did they study? Did they study enough? Were there other circumstances that may have hindered them from doing their best that day? The other thing to think about is if your child is going to experience what he/she considers doing poorly, wouldn’t this be the place where you want that to happen rather than in high school or college, where, because of the numbers in each class, they may not have the nurturing environment that cheers them on to do better the next time?

Working together, we want your child to experience success everyday!

*Barbara Cole
Principal*

Essay Contest Winner

Sharon Ewing

Katie Solomon, a sixth grader in our school, was recently the recipient of a one hundred dollar savings bond as the winner of a regional essay contest. As the first place winner, Katie was the youngest of the winners for first, second and third place in the contest. Sponsored by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Holy Family #2393 based in Summerville, the theme of the contest was “The Joys of God Surround Us”. Mrs. Patricia Merriam and Mrs. Barbara Hays, members of the Catholic Daughters, presented Katie with this award at a recent prayer service before the entire student body. Six other members of the sixth grade class received participation awards as well. Kudos, Katie! We are all very proud of your hard work and of all of the students whose efforts were recognized.



School Advisory Board & PSA



Say It Ain't So!

George Kreese, School Advisory Board President



As I was driving my son and a number of his friends to an event recently, the conversation turned to a well-known athlete and some problems he is experiencing. I was intrigued to hear that this man had made “a mistake”, and should be judged only on his athletic performance. This is, of course, what many athletes have said or implied in excusing certain illicit actions. This failure to take responsibility and show true remorse runs counter to biblical teachings and our children’s development. It is troubling that this is foisted on our children.

It has always been a shock to our collective conscience when those we respect fall from our graces. Perhaps there are more occurrences of this now, or perhaps a more aggressive and salacious press brings more of it to our attention. In either case, we are regularly exposed to the wrong doings of those with some measure of fame. This is typically followed by the wrong doer attempting to regain good will through some well-crafted public comments which frequently invoke the word “mistake”.

A mistake is “an act that unintentionally deviates from what is correct, right, or true”. Note that this definition uses the singular “act”, and the term “unintentionally”. So multiple acts (such as taking performance drugs for years) done intentionally do not represent “a mistake”. This could best be termed an intentional pattern of poor decision making.

Regarding judging this athlete on his athletic performance, he has parlayed a fortune in endorsements (which likely exceed his sports winnings) because of his previously wholesome brand. If these endorsements were awarded to him based on the public perception that he is an upstanding guy, it is reasonable that he should lose them when he proves he is not.

Whether it is a sports star, a pop star, or a politician, poor decision making is so frequently evidenced that we can almost lip-synch the tired old “I got caught and must convince you of my remorse” speech that inevitably follows the breaking news. The real pity is that we allow these individuals to take such lofty positions in our public psyche. We should all strive to replace these hollow influences in our children’s lives with a hero worthy of our adulation - one who will never disappoint them. The Bible is an excellent source for such a hero.

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Spring Fever & Summer Heat

Jhoanna Pineda-Kim, PSA President



As spring quickly presents itself as evidence on the pollen covered cars, ground, and yards, we are reminded that the school year is coming to an end. Summer was definitely felt with the burst of temperatures ranging from the mid to high 80’s. I know everyone is having Spring fever, but we still have a lot to accomplish and finish before school ends.

I hope that everyone enjoyed their Spring Break. Easter is a time of renewal as Jesus is resurrected from the dead; it reminds us that we can have a new beginning. I hope that the students will have a renewed sense of enthusiasm for school and continue it for the remaining days of the school year. I want to thank Mrs. Ray and Mrs. Vaughn for heading our Field Day. Also to all the parent volunteers who participated in making the day fun, thank you. All the students enjoyed all the various games and activities, and of course, the yummy sno-cones !

Just a reminder, we are continuously working on this coming Oscar Night Auction. Any donations and help towards making our coming auction successful are appreciated. You can call Tina Winchip or Luanne Aycocock with any questions.

Again thank you to all the parents who help make St. John Neumann a success. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding the PSA, please call me at 361-3811 or email me at jpinedakim@sc.rr.com.

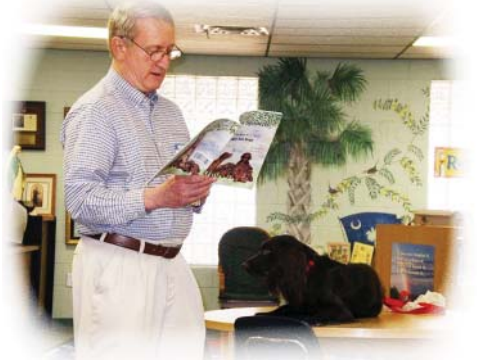


Library Literacy

Boykins & Books

Karen Zimmerman

Did you know that the first Boykin Spaniel was named Dumpy and was a stray adopted by L. Whitaker Boykin, or that Governor Riley was responsible for making the Boykin Spaniel the Official State Dog of South Carolina? Second and third grade students learned these facts and much more about our state dog, when Mr. Lynn Kelley came to St. John Neumann School on March 24. Mr. Kelley read his book, *The First Boykin Spaniels: The Story of Dumpy and Singo* and also answered the many questions of our students. Mr. Kelley also brought along his Boykin Spaniel puppy, which proved to be quite a hit with the audience!



Another popular event, our Summer Reading Book Fair, will take place on May 12th and May 13th from 7:30 until 4:30 each day. Once again, Books-A-Million will provide books for parents and students to purchase. Summer reading lists will be available at the book fair, and lists of required reading will be sent home along with the price of the books prior to the Book Fair. In addition to the required reading, there will be a variety of great books for sale, perfect to share on those hot, lazy days of summer! Plan to stop by the library during our Book Fair to pick up some good books for this summer!

Birthday Books



Olivia Clark, March 31, from her Grandparents Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Clark, Jr. for her 5th birthday

Stephanie Six, April 3, from Mom, Dad, & Alex for her 12th birthday

Hailey Laubacker, April 4, with love from Mommy for her birthday

Andrew Scott, April 15, from Nana & Papa for his 8th birthday



Memory

Mrs. Zelachowski in Memory of the birthday of Ian Williams, son of Dr. & Mrs. Williams

The Randall Family in Memory of their sweet Dundee

SJN Students & Faculty in memory of Helen Radzavicz, Grandmother of Mrs. Ayres



Other

Mrs. Linda C. Swanson in Honor of her Grandson, Christopher Tucker on St. Patrick's Day

Mrs. Linda C. Swanson in Honor of her Grandson, Christopher Tucker at Easter

Bill and Pat Mason

Sam & Hardy Childers, as Graduates of SJN, to promote a love of science





What's Happening

Differentiated Instruction

Alison Levitt

Have you wondered why SJN has made so many changes and why you are hearing about differentiating instruction all the time? Have you asked yourself why different students are getting different spelling lists or different homework? Have you questioned why your child may be receiving B's now when they used to get A's? Children today are very different from when we were young. They have many more opportunities and have had a multitude of experiences we may not have had until much later. Life is more fast-paced and challenging now, also. Future educational opportunities are going to be far more difficult to attain than in the past due to more competitive applicants. Education is changing, and SJN is on track to help assist your child for the future.

We strongly believe that if we dedicate time and resources to finding the best way your child learns and where your child is achieving academically, we can better assist him/her for future educational endeavors. Our students aren't just learning material. They are learning how to learn as well as what to learn. Our teachers focus on each child's individual level in order to meet that child's needs and challenge them appropriately. St. John Neumann provides a nurturing environment with teachers who genuinely care for and know their students on a personal level. What better environment to be challenged than in a loving, supportive one? Yes, your child may have different work and may be getting a B rather than the A of the past, but he/she is being challenged at his/her own level. Would you rather have a child fully prepared for whatever lies ahead in school or one who has had the easy A and is not prepared?

As a parent at SJN, I know I am glad my children have been challenged and have learned how to be the best students they can be. SJN provides opportunities for all students to not only Experience Success each day but in the future.

Let's Dig

Janet Timmerman

Imagine 18 intrepid 8 and 9 year olds with shovels, buckets, and great anticipation, venturing out on the back field of St. John Neumann looking for fossils. We have been very fortunate for the past 6 years in having George Kreese, a parent and recreational archeologist, lead the second grade classes on a fossil dig.

The students have been studying where and when dinosaurs and oceanic animals lived on earth. Amazingly enough, South Carolina, was once entirely under water. So, we gathered our tools and with Mr. Kreese leading the dig, the children carefully began to scope out a site and carefully dug out a spot and found vertebrates, sharks teeth, whale teeth, rib bones, and many other fascinating bones. After exhausting their site and successfully recovering some great finds, they gathered their tools and returned to the Science Lab, where we carefully dusted off the fossils, cleaned them up and cataloged them for study. The larger fossils were taken by Mr. Kreese to the University of South Carolina for further study.

What a week in the life of a second grader at St. John Neumann!





Teacher Focus

Getting to Know Our SJN Teachers

Marti Schottelkotte



Did you know Mrs. Ayres is a passionate golfer? How about that she once worked as a Ski Patrol and used to lifeguard? Mrs. Ayres has two children that both graduated from SJN! Now that she sees what a great foundation of skills and manners they learned from the wonderful teachers here, she tries to uphold those values with all the students she teaches...wow what terrific pay-back!

Did you know that Ms. Lighthart has eight cats, six dogs, one horse and one pony? What a menagerie! One of her greatest challenges was the rescue of about one hundred animals. In the process she found homes for one horse, seventeen cats, two chinchillas, five rabbits and seventy-five dogs. There is nothing light about her heart!



Did you know that Mrs. Hornsby's hobbies include Landscape and Still Life painting in oils? Photography, too. She loves to go walking on the beach at Seabrook Island. Mrs. Hornsby will soon be a grandma three times over – her daughter is expecting her third child in August. Welcome to the “three club!”

Did you know Ms Cambre graduated from elementary school in Libya, Africa, high school in Leysin, Switzerland and then was a governess in Switzerland for a year before coming to the States for college? As she explains, being an “oil company brat” and an Army wife has taken her all over the world. These travels have introduced her to various life styles, cultures, languages and people to use as a base for teaching. SJN sure does get to reap the rewards from these sojourns! Mrs. Cambre's worldly experiences are fascinating... growing up in Libya, she experienced 115-degree temps with no air conditioners. Her family dealt with sand storms so heavy they couldn't see outdoors. They had cholera outbreaks where everyone had to go to the school and get shots. They survived a military coup d'etat where they went from a king to General Ghaddafi. They were evacuated during the Arab/Israeli War where they had to sneak to the Airbase and be flown out on camouflaged aircraft. They had no telephone, no television, once a week mail, had to walk everywhere and went to school on Sunday and church on Friday in accordance with Muslem traditions. Wow! If Ms. Cambre could go anywhere, she'd love to go to Australia or New Zealand and snorkel off their coasts with her husband of thirty-five years – who, she met in eighth grade!



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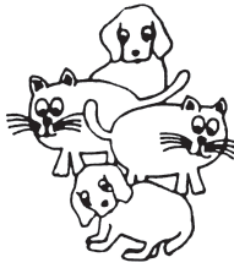
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Fifth Graders & Heifer International



The fifth graders and SJN partnered with Heifer International by raising money to buy animals. Yes...animals! These animals will provide food, such as eggs and milk, to children around the world. Our students were thrilled to help alleviate hunger in our world.

