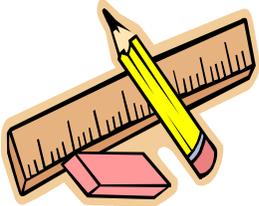


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# SEPTEMBER NEWS



## **SAINT MICHAEL SCHOOL**

301 St. Elizabeth Street

P.O. Box 67

Loretto, PA 15940

Telephone & Fax (814) 472-9117

[rphister@st-michael-school.org](mailto:rphister@st-michael-school.org)



### **PRINCIPAL'S CORNER**

We want to officially welcome all of you to the "2017-2018 School Year!" A new year means new opportunities to continue with the excellent traditions of Saint Michael School as well as look forward to new exciting programs and positive changes! We strive to work closely with students, family, and our local community to make sure your child receives the best educational opportunities possible!

As you know, regular timely attendance is the most critical investment you can make in your student's academic growth and achievement. **Please remember that your child must bring a written excuse for absences or tardiness. Official excuse forms can be obtained from our school website under "forms."** If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please inform the office prior to the scheduled absence. Students should be in their classrooms ready to learn at 8:25 AM. Any student who arrives to school **after 8:25 AM** is considered tardy. **They will have to check in at the office first to request a "LATE PASS" before reporting to their classrooms. Late passes will also be issued to students who loiter in hallways after the late bell has rung and will be marked tardy for the day.**

Evidence shows that students who regularly attend school on time:

- Achieve better grades
- Perform more successfully on tests
- Are more successful after high school graduation
- Become responsible, productive citizens

Children who walk into class late are not only more self-conscious, but they are at a disadvantage because they've missed important instruction. If your child is tardy...it impacts the entire class! Tardiness decreases class instruction time and productivity. Being on time every day is a job shared between parents and

students. This is tough for all families, but intentional planning and practiced routines can make getting out the door (on time) easier in the morning.

Please consider joining our school volunteer program as all students greatly benefit from your involvement and contributions to our school. Volunteers are needed to help us with the following activities throughout the school year:

- School-wide events (Arts & Craft Show, Toy A Rama, Catholic Schools Week, Home-School Luncheons, etc.)
- Cafeteria helpers
- Recess moms, dads, and grandparents
- Student recognition events (Kindergarten & Eighth Grade Graduation Receptions, and First Reconciliation Social)
- Formation of an outreach and recruitment committee

Our dedicated staff and I feel privileged to be a part of the Saint Michael School family where, together, we will instill Christian values and a lifelong love of learning. We thank you for your support and look forward to working with you. We know that with God's blessing this will be an amazing year!

### **2017-2018 FACULTY/STAFF**

We celebrate our faculty and staff members who remain dedicated to Saint Michael School as well as extend a warm welcome to those faculty and staff members joining our Saint Michael School family this year. Our faculty and staff for the 2017-2018 school year: Mrs. Amy Oberholtzer (Kindergarten), Mrs. June Riner (Grade 1), Mrs. Emily George, (Grade 2), Mrs. Susan Stevens (Grade 3), Mrs. Marjorie Frank (Grade 4), Mrs. Sarah Zelnosky, (Grade 5), Miss Sarah Steinbugl (Grade 6), Mrs. Amber Shaw (Grade 7), Mr. Matthew Caprio (Grade 8), Ms. Christine Driskel (Technology), Mrs. Nadine Toth (Art), Mrs. Melanie Shiley, (Music), Mrs. Lisa Beck (Phys. Ed.) and Mrs. Viki Krug (Administrative Assistant), Mrs. Becky Seymour (Cafeteria Manager), and Mr. Richard Kline (Custodian). We also welcome our itinerant staff: Mrs. Heather Hrivnak (Math Specialist), Miss Megan Lloyd (Reading Specialist), Mrs. Lynn Dongell (Title I Reading Specialist), and Mrs. Melanie Mergen (Speech Therapist). We are looking forward to a rewarding and exciting year!

### **WELCOME**

We wish to welcome back those families who have been with us and extend a warm welcome to our new families: Richard & Melissa McMullen (Connor – 5<sup>th</sup>, Meghan – 4<sup>th</sup>), Bradley Lego & Joanne Buck (Mina – K), Roberta & Bryan Shuagis (Brenlyn – K), Carol Stoltz (Carter –K), Joseph & Elizabeth Strittmatter (Joseph -K), Dave & Lee Ann Weslager (Alison -3, Devin -K), and Stephen & Vanessa Yanzetich (Jocelyn-K). We are happy you have chosen to be a part of our school family and are eager to work with you as partners in your child(ren)'s Catholic education.

We welcome our **newest members** to our school family: Alison Weslager (Grade 3), Meghan McMullen (Grade 4), and Conner McMullen (Grade 5). Our **kindergarten friends** are: Alex Beck, Blane Clapper, Bennett Clark, Brady Diehl, Bryce Eckenrode, Kyle Gailey, Ava Hoover, Evan Hoover, Mina Lego, Brenltn Miller, Carter Stoltz, Joseph Strittmater, Devin Weslager, and Jocelyn Yanzetich. We are looking forward to having you and your families' part of our school!

## **COMMUNICATION**

We will make every effort to keep you informed of the exciting activities our students will be engaged in throughout the school year through our monthly newsletter, church bulletin, local newspapers, and School Messenger. All families are encouraged to visit the school's website @ [www.st-michael-school.org](http://www.st-michael-school.org) as well as the Basilica's website @ [www.basilicasm-loretto.org/](http://www.basilicasm-loretto.org/). Click on the school link for announcements, school news, the monthly newsletter, calendar, monthly menu, and other important information. Also, the Cresson Mainliner has been cooperative in publishing pictures and news articles concerning our school, so you may want to consider purchasing a subscription.

## **SCHOOL MESSENGER**

In our effort to improve communication between parents and school, we will be using School Messenger that will allow school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or delays. The service will also be used to communicate general announcements and reminders.

Due to recent upgrades to our PowerSchool system, parents will not be able to access PowerSchool until **September 11<sup>th</sup>**. The implementation of the upgrades took longer than anticipated. This time will allow teachers to familiarize themselves with the program. Until then, if you have any questions concerning your child's progress, you may call to make an appointment to speak their teacher.

## **HOME-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The Home-School Association is in existence to help parents and teachers better understand their roles and responsibilities in the education process and to work cooperatively for the benefit of the students. The Association provides moral and financial support to the school. All parents/guardians of Saint Michael School's students are members of the association and are encouraged to take part in the meetings and activities. **The association provides a wonderful way to get to know the parents of your child(ren)'s classmates!**

Meetings are held quarterly on the **second Thursday** of the following months, October, January, March, and May at 6:00PM in the school cafeteria. All Saint Michael School parents are members and your input matters. **Plan on attending and becoming active members in the life of our school!**

## **CAFETERIA**

We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Becky Seymour will assume responsibility for our lunch program this year. A letter with the application for Free/Reduced lunches was sent home earlier this month. Please call the school office if you did not receive this important information. Please return completed applications promptly. A student lunch, including milk will cost **\$2.40**. Lunches can be purchased ahead of time, preferably in multiples of 5: 5 lunches for \$12.00, 10 lunches for \$24.00, 15 lunches for \$36.00, 20 lunches for \$48.00, and so on. Milk will also be available for .45 cents a carton if your child would like to purchase an additional milk or if they pack their lunch.

If you are sending in a **la carte money** for your child, it **MUST** be separate from their regular lunch money. Students are responsible for remembering to take their a la carte money to the cafeteria during their designated lunchtime. It is a good practice, especially for younger students to put their a la carte money in an envelope marked with their name so that it can be returned if misplaced.

Students who **received** free or reduced price lunches last school year will continue to receive them until **October 6, 2017**. **All Free and Reduced Applications must be received by September 29, 2017.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Lunch money is to be paid separately from all other fees.**

## **FAMILY PRAYER DAY**

As we pray together as a school family each day, we will be remembering one family and their intentions in our prayers. Each family's special day will be listed on the monthly calendar that is sent home at the beginning of the month.

If at any time during the year you have particular intentions you would like us to remember, please call or send in a note and we will join our prayers with yours.

## **SCHOOL RULES**

A copy of specific school rules that apply to **ALL** students is being sent home today. Please read and keep them as a reference. (Please note that electronic devices of any kind **including cell phones** are **NOT** permitted).

If you, as a parent, feel it is necessary for your child to have an electronic device for after school purposes, they must turn it into the school office in the morning and retrieve it at the end of the school day. **If** a student is caught with an electronic device at school or is using it to text or call on school premises (**this includes bus dismissal**), it will be taken by the teacher and sent to the office. Parents will be notified and the item will be returned to the student at the end of the day unless, it is at the end of the day, the item

will not be returned until the end of the following day. The student will be **assigned 1 hour after school detention.**

If the offense occurs a **second time**, the device will be confiscated and will be returned to a parent/guardian. **The student will be suspended for one day. Subsequent offenses will result in the confiscation of the item and will be returned to parent/guardian. The student will be suspended for more than one (1) day at the principal's discretion.** We trust this will not happen. However, in the event that it does, we expect your full cooperation.

We are aware, and find it disappointing that not all our students comply with this policy. On numerous occasions phones have rung throughout the school day or signaled that they were receiving a text; not to mention when they come to the office to let us know you are picking them up early when we have yet to be notified.

I am aware that a big concern was having one individual from the class responsible for bringing and picking up the devices from the office. Students feared they would drop them. Teachers have compromised and allow their students to put cell phones, in particular, in a basket and then lock it in their filing cabinet throughout the duration of the school day.

## **GREAT AMERICAN OPPORTUNITIES FUNDRAISING PROGRAM**

Information concerning our Pay-By-Mail Magazine program and Cookie Dough Sale was sent home last week. Last year's magazine subscriptions were fulfilled in a fast and efficient manner. If there are any problems, the program guarantees satisfaction. Our cookie dough sales were phenomenal and doubled our profits from the previous year. Way to go!

The money raised from this fundraiser is used to obtain needed materials which benefit our students. This program basically sells itself. A delivery date for the cookie dough will be announced so that you will have ample notice in order to make arrangements for pick up. **We encourage all families to participate.** This year's program will end on **September 13<sup>th</sup>.**

As outlined in the "**Parent Letter,**" that was in your fundraiser packet, all students of families who sell **15 or more items** will be eligible to watch the "**Chicago Boys**" from **America's got Talent** that will be held in late fall. All students will be eligible to participate if our school goal of \$9,000.00 is reached. All students of families who sell **25 or more items** will be eligible to go to a private movie showing!

## **FEES**

In addition to the Art and Technology Fees already assessed on your tuition bill, students owe for the following supplies.

**Grade 1:** Primary Composition Book -- \$1.25  
Journal -- \$1.25  
Homework Book - \$5.00

**Grade 2:** Journal Book - \$2.00  
Homeworkbook - \$5.00

**Grades 3 – 8:** Homework Book -- \$5.00

**PLEASE** attend to these fees as soon as possible. If they are not paid by **September 22, 2017**, they will be added to your October's tuition bill.

### **BOOKS/BACKPACKS**

**ALL books must be covered at ALL times.** The student's name and subject should be clearly written on the front cover. Reminder: book socks are not permitted because of the damage they have caused to our books. Clear contact paper can be used to cover workbooks, but **DO NOT** use it to cover textbooks!

Each student must have a book bag/ back pack to protect his/her books while carrying them to and from school. Students are required to pay for any book that is damaged or lost.

### **DRESS CODE**

The students in grades 1 through 8 wear uniforms. The purpose of a school uniform is to eliminate competition among students. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS PARENTS TO SEE THAT YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN ADHERE(S) TO THE SCHOOL POLICY CONCERNING THE DRESS CODE.** Please review the following:

From now until the end of September (or later, depending on the weather), all students (grades 1-8) may wear navy or khaki dress shorts, white or light blue dress shirts or blouses, or white, light blue, or navy knit shirts with a collar.

From October 1<sup>st</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup>, **girls** may choose from the following options:

Green plaid jumper / white or light blue blouse  
Green plaid skirt or culottes/ navy vest / white or light blue blouse  
Navy or khaki slacks / white or light blue blouse / navy vest

**PLEASE NOTE:** Girls do not need to wear a vest with shorts. However, a vest **must** be worn with skirts and slacks.

From October 1<sup>st</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup>, **boys** have a choice of the following:

Navy dress slacks / white or light blue dress shirt or white, light blue or navy knit shirt

Khaki dress slacks / white or light blue dress shirt or white, light blue or navy knit shirt. “**Dress slacks**” mean that no sports pants, pants with rivets, jeans (blue or **khaki colored or the like**) may be worn. Painter or cargo pants, pants with external pockets and/or zippers on the pockets are not allowed. This includes **Dickies** brand pants that have pockets on the legs.

Dress shirts and blouses are light blue or white ONLY. Navy sweaters (without hoods) may be worn for warmth during the winter months. SOCKS (crew socks or knee-high) are to be worn at all times. They are to be solid white, black, or navy (**NO LOW CUT ATHLETIC SOCKS MAY BE WORN**). **Socks must cover the ankles.** Girls may wear NAVY tights for warmth during cooler months.

For safety reasons, open-toed and open-backed sandals, shoes, clogs or boots of any kind are not permitted. Solid, dark colored black or brown dress shoes that are practical and safe for the school environment must be worn. This includes days in which students may be out of uniform (dress down days, picture days, etc.)

**Kindergarten students** do not wear uniforms. However, they are expected to adhere to the following:

No tank tops or muscle shirts are permitted.

Shorts may be worn from the first day of school until the end of September and from the first of May through the end of the school year.

No open-toed and open-backed sandals, shoes, or clogs are permitted.

Our dress code is intended to promote a sense of belonging and to foster an environment conducive to learning. Students learn the importance of following established policies and are expected to be appropriately attired for specific places and occasions.

Any student found to be in violation of the dress code (for example: an untucked shirt, low-cut socks, skirt/uniform that is too short, cargo pants, etc.) will be written up and given a DRESS CODE VIOLATION FORM to be taken home for his/her parent's signature. The first form serves as a warning.

If a child is written up a second time, parents will be called to correct the situation AND the student receives a school detention.

## **LOCKERS**

It is recommended that all students in grades 3 – 8 be responsible for keeping a lock on their lockers over weekends and holiday vacations. Locks with two keys or a combination lock can be purchased. One key OR the combination to the lock, along with the student's name, must be turned into the office.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Parent volunteers are vital to our school program! Each year we need help in the following areas: cafeteria workers, library aides, recess monitors and field trip chaperones. In order to volunteer in the school setting, parents are required to participate in the online **Youth Protection Program** (formerly Protecting God's Children). The Youth Protection Program is a one hour self-guided training course provided by the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. This mandatory training is required for all employees, all clergy, and all volunteers who will have ongoing contact with minors. Only new employees and **new volunteers** must take the online training. If you have previously taken the Protecting God's Children training, you **do not** have to take the online training. To access this site go to [www.ajdiocese.org](http://www.ajdiocese.org) . On the left hand side click Youth Protection. Once there, click on register. The site will guide you through the training. **Once you have successfully completed the training, print the Certificate of Completion and turn it in to the school office.** Be sure to keep your password. In addition, before you are permitted to volunteer you must apply for and submit a certificate of compliance. If you have any questions about necessary documentation please call the school office.

As per diocesan policy the submission of clearances and all other required documentation necessary for an individual to volunteer must be submitted by the **first of each month** in order to qualify for volunteering. For example: if you wait until May to apply for your clearances and complete the diocesan required Youth Protection Training Program you will **NOT** be eligible to chaperone field trips.

We **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** anyone who may consider volunteering, coaching, assisting in coaching, or only volunteering one day throughout the year, to complete the process **NOW**. Do not wait until it is too late to have everything processed.

We are more than willing to assist you in completing the entire paperwork and training process. Our school needs you.

## **YOUTH PROTECTION PROGRAM TRAINING & CLEARANCE WORKSHOP**

For your convenience, Ms. Driskel will conduct a workshop for anyone wishing to obtain their clearances on Monday, **September 25th beginning at 4:30 until 6:00 PM.** Mrs. Phister will be available to assist prospective volunteers in completing the Diocesan Youth Protection Program requirement and the paperwork that accompanies the training. If you do not have your clearances, you are **strongly encouraged** to take advantage of this help session.

Our parent volunteers are one of the biggest assets we have at our school and your commitment and dedication are truly appreciated. If you are interested in attending, please contact the school office. Future sessions will be held periodically throughout the school year as needed.

## **SCHEDULE**

Bus students arrive at school between **8:10 and 8:25 AM**.

Walkers/car riders should arrive at school **NO EARLIER** than **8:10 AM**.

All students are expected to enter and exit the building via the side door closest to the gym. **DO NOT use the front entrance!**

Dismissal of walkers – approximately **2:45 PM**. (**upstairs, rear entrance**)

Dismissal of bus students – **2:50 – 3:05 PM**.

Walkers will be dismissed from the upstairs, rear entrance of the school building, closest to Our Lady of Loretto Hall (OLOLH). Parents are asked to park in a line along the **right hand side only** of Saint Elizabeth Street facing the OLOLH building. The overflow of cars awaiting the pickup of their child are asked to extend into the parking lot adjacent to the school, until there is ample space to proceed into the pickup line. **SAINT ELIZABETH STREET SHOULD NOT BE BLOCKED AT ANY GIVEN TIME**. Students will be escorted to you as your vehicle assumes the first position in line. Please do not come into the building to get your child. After you have secured your child, you are then asked to proceed along Saint Elizabeth Street to exit.

**In addition, NO STUDENT will be permitted to use the SCHOOL BUS LINE to ride home with a friend or to a relative's house. Do not assume that if you write a note, your child can ride a bus to which they are not assigned. This is no longer permitted.** If your child needs to go to a friend's house after school, they must be picked up as a walker. Parents must contact Wilkinson's Bus Lines if they need to alter their usual means of transportation.

The school doors will not be unlocked in the mornings until **8:00 AM**. If it is necessary for a student to come earlier than 8:00 AM, **prior arrangements** must be made in the school office.

We ask parents who come to school during the day to park in the parking lot adjacent to the school, across from the Basilica. The blacktop area is utilized by our students during recess and physical education classes throughout the year.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Parents and visitors who come to school during the day are asked to use the front door (across from the Basilica). Please RING THE BUZZER located to the right of the door for admittance to the building. **THEN REPORT TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO SIGN IN.**

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

School attendance is of utmost importance. We discourage parents from requesting the early dismissal of children. **If** an early dismissal is necessary, please observe the following procedure:

1. The student must present a note to the teacher indicating the time and **REASON** for early dismissal.
2. The parent or guardian must come to the **School Office** for the child. ALL visitors must sign in and out of the building. **PLEASE DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO THE CLASSROOM.**
3. If the parent or guardian is unable to pick up their child, the person in whose custody the child is to be released must be made known to the principal.

### **ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE**

We trust that you, as parents, are interested in the success of your child in school and are, therefore, aware that regular attendance is absolutely essential to successful schoolwork.

A child's absence is excused in cases of **illness, death in the family, or other grave reasons.**

If your child will not be in school on a particular day, please observe the following:

1. **Please notify the School Office (472-9117) by 8:30 AM** when your child is absent. Failure to do so necessitates the school calling home to verify the absence.
2. **Upon returning** to school, students must **present a dated excuse** that states the dates absent, reason for absence, and the signature of the parent/guardian. **Failure to present said excuse within 3 days constitutes an illegal absence.** Official school issued excuse forms are available on our website for your convenience. Excuses, by law must be kept on file for one year.
3. If your child is absent, missed assignments and homework may be sent home with a sibling or can be picked up in the office between **2:40 and 3:30 PM** only. (Please call ahead and let us know if you intend to pick up the child's work so it can be in the office when you arrive.)
4. Vacation Policy: A vacation approval form must be obtained from the school office and filed prior to the start date of the scheduled vacation. Please read below additional information in regard to vacations throughout the school year.

### **PLEASE NOTE IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

1. **No homework will be sent home before or during a vacation. Work is to be completed after the student returns.**

2. **If a student is on vacation, standardized tests will not be made up. Our standardized testing this year is scheduled for April 4<sup>th</sup> - April 13<sup>th</sup>.**

## **SCRIP**

Information concerning the SCRIP Program was sent home last week. The SCRIP program has the potential to raise a hefty profit. Please plan to participate in this major fundraiser.

It was unanimously voted upon by all School Council members that participation in our SCRIP Program become mandatory. The proposal is as follows:

- Each family will be mandated to purchase **\$750** of SCRIP (Gift Cards) at face value, not net percentage profit, **per** calendar school **year** (August – May).
- Gift cards may be purchased at once or over the period of the school year with the final purchase having to be made by **May 14, 2018**.
- Families have the option to buy out of this mandatory fundraiser by paying a fee of **\$100.00**. **If your family contribution of gift card purchases (\$750) is not satisfied by May 14, 2018, \$100 will be added to your tuition account.**

## **MONTHLY CALENDAR**

Please keep the monthly calendar in a place where you can refer to it throughout the month. This will serve as a reminder and will ensure your presence at school activities and aid you in adhering to school deadlines.

## **FACULTY IN-SERVICES**

The dates for faculty meetings and Diocesan Teacher In-services have been placed on the yearly calendar and will also be listed on the monthly calendars. Bus transportation will be provided on half-day sessions.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES**

Each student in every grade is expected to have a pair of tennis shoes specifically for use in the gym (**the shoes do not need to be new**). Students will change their shoes upon entering the facility.

In addition to tennis shoes, students in grade 1 through 8 must have the school approved gym uniform. **Students are permitted to wear tennis shoes with their gym uniform on the day of their gym class.** **All physical education classes for grades k-8 will be held on Mondays.** Physical Education classes began on Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

## **BUILDING PEACEMAKERS PROGRAM**

We know that you want the school environment to be safe and free of violence. Our *Building Peacemakers Program (formerly No Bullying)* deals with the problem of bully violence.

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior that is intentional, hurtful, and repeated. The person who bullies has more power than the person who is targeted.

Criteria that will help determine if a student is being bullied:

- The mistreatment is *intentional*.
- The mistreatment is *hurtful* (physically or psychologically).
- The mistreatment *occurs more than once*.
- There is an *imbalance of power* (physical, intellectual, or social). The target has difficulty defending himself or herself.

Within the broad definition are many different types of bullying: Physical Bullying, Verbal Bullying, Relational or Social Bullying, Cyberbullying.

However, it is NOT bullying when someone is teased in a friendly manner. And, it is NOT bullying when two students of approximately equal strength, ability or advantage fight or argue. These are social issues which will be addressed appropriately by encouraging Christian behavior among all students.

Your child(ren) will be involved in a series of lessons designed to help him/her define and understand what is and what is not bullying. As a school, we have a policy regarding bullying. Under that policy, bullying will not be tolerated.

## **BOOK FAIR**

Our annual Book Fair will be held **September 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>**. Information about the books available for purchase will be sent home with the students the week before the fair.

## **GUITAR LESSONS**

Again this year, Mrs. Mary Ann Shoemaker will be offering guitar lessons. Parents of interested students in grades 4 – 8 should call the school office (472-9117) as soon as possible. Availability for lessons is limited. The names will be forwarded to Mrs. Shoemaker and she will contact you. (Returning students are to call the office also.) Lessons are tentatively scheduled to begin in late September.

## **SLEEP MATTERS**

Do you know how much sleep your children need each night? If they're between the ages of 5 and 10, they should be getting 10 to 11 hours. Children age 11 and up should sleep for 8.5 to 9.5 hours a night. Parents can promote better sleep habits by:

- Finishing meals two to three hours before bedtime.
- Turning off the television and other electronic devices at least one hour before bedtime.
- Enforcing consistent bedtimes.
- Having a calming bedtime routine.

Source: National Sleep  
Foundation

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you should have any questions throughout the school year.

We are grateful for your trust and confidence and hope to see all families at our annual **Open House** on **Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM.**

Let us pray each day for God's blessings on all our efforts this year.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Renee Phister, Principal