



# Saint Teresa of Avila School

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## **Faith Grows • Excellence Abounds**

The mission of St. Teresa of Avila School is to provide a foundation in the Catholic faith as we integrate Christian values with the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development of the child. Committed to the highest standards of academic excellence, we enrich our students with the knowledge and skills essential for life-long learning in the 21st Century.

### ***OPENING EXTRA***

August 29, 2011

Dear Saint Teresa of Avila School Families,

Today we celebrate the one hundred and fifth first day of school at St. Teresa of Avila! And we open our doors to 280 of the most important people in the world: **our students!** Our student body includes 44 new students and 24 of these students are from families new to St. Teresa of Avila School. We welcome you all and are so happy that each and every one of you is here! And, of course, we are so very happy to have our “veteran” students returning from our prekindergarten fours to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students!

The summer which flew by so very quickly was a busy time in the halls of our school. Everywhere I look there are exciting things to see and exciting things happening! The school is sparkling clean due to the diligence of our maintenance staff. A new reading series for our students in kindergarten through grade five will be introduced, and the Palumbo Art Studio and the Palumbo Music Studio have been given a totally new look. Our Tobin Library has been enhanced with the installation of new book shelves! You will definitely want to see those areas!

Many volunteer hours went into these renovations, including the removal of all library books and shelves and the replacement of the books on the brand new shelves. In addition, the computer room was dismantled, many desktop computers and tables placed in various classrooms and that learning space is now the Palumbo Music Studio. The art room has had a complete renovation floor to ceiling and is now the Palumbo Art Studio. Much of the dismantling and replacing work was done by volunteer parents, students, alumni and faculty. Mark Baskinger was the driving force behind the new look in both the art and music learning areas. We are so very grateful for the hard work of so many people in the efforts to totally

enhance our lower level of the school. You will definitely want to take the time to visit all of these areas.

***SAINT TERESA OF AVILA PARISH FESTIVAL*** Our parish festival which ended this past Saturday was very successful for many reasons, especially the participation of so many of our school families. It was a nice way to bring the school family back together and it was also great to see so many of you volunteering in a great variety of ways! Thank you!

***NEW APPROACH TO COMPUTER EDUCATION*** Beginning the first day of school all computer education will take place using our three mobile computer labs. The labs will be available to all students and their learning will take place using laptop computers. The desktop computers will continue to be used in the music studio as well as in various classrooms throughout the building.

***NEW LUNCH SCHEDULE*** We will be implementing a new lunch schedule beginning on September 6, 2011. Beginning at 11:30 when the kindergarten students will begin their lunch period, there will be a continuous serving line until all students who are purchasing lunch will be served. Grades 1-3 will move to the café at 11:40, and Grades 4-5 at 11:50, when Grades 6,7, and 8 will move to outdoor recess. Middle grade students will move to the café line when the line shortens. Students will have sufficient time to eat and be dismissed for outdoor recess when they have finished. Lunchtime monitors, including parents, faculty and staff, will supervise the students and dismiss them when they have finished eating.

Kindergarten-Grade 3 will return to their homerooms at 12:20 and Grades 4-8 at 12:25. Afternoon classes begin at 12:30. The amount of time designated for lunch is still the same.

***MIDDLE STATES SELF STUDY*** During the summer the final revisions were made to our Middle States document. Special thanks to Vicki McGoey for doing an excellent job of proof reading the 185 page study. We will now submit the study to The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools: Elementary Division. The chairperson of the team of professional educators who will visit our school has been named. Ms. Jodi Bossio, a faculty member at Sacred Heart School, Washington, D.C., will lead the group who will visit us for four days from October 18-21, 2011. You will receive more information as we move closer to the visit, including the opportunity to meet with the team.

As you may remember we examined and evaluated every aspect of our curriculum, community and governance, looked at areas of strength and areas in need of improvement and wrote a strategic plan for improvement which will be implemented over the next several years.

Once we have the document officially in print you may review that document here in school.

***OPEN HOUSE*** All parents are asked to be present at our annual Open House to be held Monday, September 12, 2011, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The “adult only” meeting will begin with a gathering of all parents in Henninger Hall for introduction of faculty, remarks by PTG, and my opening remarks, including more exciting plans. This meeting will be followed by an opportunity to tour the school to see the many improvements and to meet the faculty, as well as

to meet new families and reacquaint yourselves with other St. Teresa of Avila parents. While there will not be formal presentations by individual teachers, you are encouraged to introduce yourself to each of your child's teachers, and ask any questions you may have. All curriculum guidelines will be posted on the school's website.

More information on the open house will be in next week's **EXTRA**.

**OPENING OF SCHOOL PACKET** Please take the time to review the material in the packet. You will see that the packet is both informational and invitational. There are several forms that you are asked to complete which are required by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Your cooperation in completing all forms and returning them to school quickly will be very much appreciated.

**TUITION PAYMENTS** Your timely payments enable us to be accountable stewards as well as to pay all those to whom we are responsible. The fourth payment will be due September 1, 2011.

As we begin a new school year, we are looking forward to working with you and our students. Together we can do great things!

Please remember in your prayer all those who have died, all those who are ill, and for peace in our world especially in the Middle East.

Blessings,

Sister Karen Brink, OSB, Principal

**REPEATS OF IMPORTANCE:**

**2011-2012 SCHOOL CALENDAR** As you begin to plan activities for the new school year, we are respectfully requesting that when planning family trips during the school year, that you take into consideration the "long stretches" of time when school is not in session. The more a student is present in school the less "make up" work that needs to be done. Your cooperation in this matter will be appreciated.