



St. Joan of Arc School



August 23, 2023

Dear SJA Families,

Our building has truly come alive this week. Construction workers have added new doorways, poured concrete for a new walkway and connected new pipes. The faculty have been decorating rooms, unpacking books, and planning lessons all focused on our mission:

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School is a faith community of educators, learners, and families using God's gifts to develop 21st Century skills of innovation, collaboration, problem-solving, and reasoning to enrich the global society.

We have chosen "Joy is Our Strength" as our theme this year. Based on "**Nehemiah 8:10.**" Our SJA students and faculty will ask each day for "Joy" from God to give us the "Strength" we need to face the challenges before us, just as our patron St. Joan of Arc found her strength in God's Joy.

As we finish our preparations for the start of the school year, listed are the teaching and staff assignment for the 2023 -2024 School year.

Ms. Reith, Mrs. Sanphillipo - PreK
Mrs. Lane, Mrs. Hinch - Kindergarten
Mrs. Nocket, Mrs. McNeil - Grade 1
Mrs. Simmons, Mrs. Cooke - Grade 2
Mrs. Camarota - Grade 3
Mr. McCann – Grade 4 Homeroom, Grade 4 & 5 Social Studies and Language Arts
Mrs. Tobias – Grade 4 Religion, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Cosgrove – Grade 4 Science, Grade PreK-4 ADST, Grade PreK – 5 Library
Mrs. Baur –Grade 5 Homeroom, Grade 4, 5, 6, & 7 Math, Resource
Mrs. Way – Grade 5 Science, Grade 5 -8 ADST, Grade 6-8 Research
Ms. Blackburn – Grade 8 Homeroom, Grade 5, 6, 7, & 8 Religion, PreK – 8 Physical Education
Mr. Bentkowski – Grade 8 Homeroom, Grade 6, 7 & 8 Social Studies, Grade 6 & 7 Math
Mrs. Burns – Grade 6 Homeroom, Grade 6, 7 & 8 Language Arts
Mrs. Field – Grade 7 Homeroom, Grade 6, 7, & 8 Science, Grade 8 Math
Mrs. Dandino – Grade PreK – 8 Music, SJA Voices
Mrs. Kruse - Grade PreK – 8 Art
Mrs. Rodriguez - Grade PreK – 8 Spanish
Mrs. Thamert – Grades 4-8 Band
Mrs. Baer – Nurse
Mrs. McKee – Counselor
Mrs. Dotterweich – Director of Early Childhood and Aftercare
Mrs. Vara – Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Franke – Business Manager
Mrs. Maid - Advancement Director

We are all excited to welcome the students as they return on August 28. Drop off for Grades 1-8 will proceed as normal. Please see the Transportation Procedures on page 17 of the [Student/Parent Handbook](#).

Be sure you are ready for the first day. [School Supply Lists](#), [the Uniform Policy](#), [the Student/Parent Handbook](#), the School Calendar, and [Extended Care](#) information can all be found on our [School Website](#) along with the [Weekly Newsletter](#) which is posted each week at 4:00pm. Attached is also parent information that includes accounts and apps that are used throughout the school year.

You and your students should look for a welcome email from your student's homeroom teacher on Friday, August 25 at 10:00am.

God Bless and enjoy these last few days of summer!

Ms. Dianne Kestler
Principal

Important Dates

August 28	First Day of School	12:05 dismissal	No morning care No aftercare
<i>August 29 – August 31</i>	<i>PreK and K students will dismiss at 12:05</i>		No aftercare for PreK and K
August 30	Back to school Night Grades 1 – 8	6:00pm – 8:00pm	
September 1		12:05 dismissal All students	Aftercare until 4pm
September 4	Labor Day	School closed	No aftercare
September 7	Electrical Connection	School closed	No aftercare
September 11	Freedom Walk to Festival Park	9:30am	

SJA School Board

The SJA School Board is integral part of our school. Their role is to assure that the assets and personnel of the School are used to promote and strengthen the school and the parish community of which the school is a part. Attached is a welcome letter from Stasia Marie Lozinak the new School Board Chairperson.

HSA

Our Home School Association provides programs and fundraising efforts throughout the school year to support our school. We welcome the 2023 – 2024 representatives. All parents are considered part of the Home School Association and are welcome to chair, plan and participate in all activities. Please check the Weekly newsletter for events throughout the school year

- Mrs. Jennifer Vass- President
- Mrs. Kristie Conn- Vice President
- Mrs. Helen Jeminey- Treasurer
- Mrs. Ashley Letsche- Member at Large

School Safety

In our efforts to create a safe and nurturing environment for our students, we continue to look at ways to improve safety and for our students to feel safe on our campus. St. Joan of Arc, along with the other schools throughout the Archdiocese of Baltimore have adopted and will be utilizing the Standard Response Protocol throughout our campus this school year. The administration, teachers and staff have been trained in this protocol and will be teaching this to our students upon their return to school. Attached is information about the SRP and we will share more information on Back to School night.

Back to School Night

Back to School Night will be held in person this year on August 30 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm for Parents of students in grades 1 -8. PreK and K parents will receive information at their orientation meeting.

This evening is for parents only, please **do not** bring your students with you, our space is limited and this is a time for you as parents to meet and receive important information from our teachers.

All parents are to meet in the church for general information from the administration. Parents will be dismissed to go to the classrooms for 2 sessions to accommodate parents of students in different grade levels.

6:00pm – General Meeting

6:30pm – Session One

7:15pm – Session Two

Enrollment Information

Please go into school admin and make sure all checklists items are 100% complete. <https://stjoanarc.schooladminonline.com/> Please be sure contact information is correct.

FACTS

If you have not done so already, please set up your FACTS account. Tuition payments are withdrawn automatically each month. Incidental expenses default to auto pay unless you go into your FACTS account and cancel this feature. Summer Camp, Extended Care, Field Trips and Classroom materials are examples of incidental expenses. First incidental expenses will be billed on September 25.

Should you have any questions please contact Pam Franke at pfranke@stjoanarc.org

Yearbooks

Purchase the SJA 2022-2023 School Yearbook. The cost is \$23.00 per yearbook. You can order yearbooks at <https://commpe.pictavo.com/>. Yearbooks will be distributed at the start of the school year.

From the School Nurse

Health Forms were due on July 1. Please be sure you uploaded the completed forms for your students.

Link for Health Form Requirements Per Grade: <https://sites.google.com/stjoanarc.org/nurse/health-forms>

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Please reach out if you have any questions! sbaer@stjoanarc.org,

Student Accident Insurance

If you are interested in Student Accident Insurance, please log into School Admin on complete the form under optional items. <https://stjoanarc.schooladminonline.com/>

Counselor's Corner

I wanted to introduce myself to those that are new to the SJA community. My name is Sharon McKee and I am the school counselor at SJA. I have worked in the area of children's mental health for the last 30

years and am very happy to be starting my 8th year here. This year, I will be at the school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-4. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there is any way I can support your student. My email is smckee@stjoanarc.org.

I would like to note that the first week of school, with all the changes in routine and environment, is typically exhausting for your children. You may want to consider keeping extra activities to a minimum the first week of school, allowing them some down time and hopefully avoid those meltdowns often associated with overly tired children.

I am looking forward to seeing all of our returning students and meeting our new friends next week!

Parish News

SJA Parish Picnic September 24 12:30pm to 3:00pm

Our annual Parish Picnic is coming up on September 24th. All are invited to attend this fun and popular parish event!

The parish will provide Pit Beef, Barbeque Chicken, Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, and Salads. We invite you, our parishioners, to bring desserts to share, or just come and enjoy. Guests are also asked to provide drinks for their families. Water, ice, and cups will be made available.

In addition, there will be games for the kids (and young at heart) as well as spot prizes, good conversation and lots of laughs!



Parent Information 2023 -2024



School Times

7:50am Parking lot opens for drop off
7:50am - 8:10am Students go directly to Homeroom
8:10am Students are late and need to report to the Main Office.
2:30pm Parents line up for dismissal, parking lot opens at 2:50pm
2:45pm - 3:10pm Office is closed for dismissal
3:05pm Dismissal begins
12:05pm Early Dismissal Days

Emergency & Weather related Closings/Delayed Openings

St. Joan of Arc School follows the same procedures for school closing and delays as does the Harford County Public School System. If Harford County schools close early because of inclement weather, SJA will do the same.

Extended Care will not open on days when school is closed. Morning Care will not be open when school is opening late. If school is dismissed early, Extended Care will be opened 1 hour after dismissal.

Dismissal Procedures -PikMyKid App

The PikMyKid app is required for all families in order to run a safe and efficient dismissal. Existing families, your account has rolled over for the new school year. Please make sure if you have a new student entering, they are registered to your account. All students will bring home a PikMyKid Car Tag at the start of school with an ID number and QR code.

New families, please download the PikMyKid app onto your mobile device. Please keep this handy in your car and hand them out to anyone who plans on picking up your child. You will be the Primary Parent for your child and in control of their dismissal time through the App. You can delegate alternate individuals, but they should have the App also as it will send a matching student ID number to the phone for us to validate the correct person is picking up the proper child. If you are part of a car pool, each child's number will be sent to the phone for validation.

VIRTUS (Volunteer)

All volunteers must complete VIRTUS training. Please [click here](#) to learn more.

Track It Forward

This is the website we use to track volunteer hours for the year. Each family is required to volunteer 20 hours per school year. If you choose not to volunteer, your FACTS account will be billed on May 14, 2024 for \$10.00 per incomplete hour for up to 20 hours. Existing families, please make sure your information is correct and you have an account on Track It Forward. New families, please click the link to register and create an account for the school year. Some opportunities are already available. We are looking forward to having volunteers back in our school! <https://www.trackitforward.com/site/stjoan-arc-school>

FACTS

All families are required to have a FACTS account. This account is initially set up through School Admin during the registration process FACTS is the platform all Archdiocesan schools use for tuition payments and incidental expenses (field trips, novels, extended care, etc.) There are two sections within your FACTS account. One for tuition and the other for incidental expenses. Tuition payments are

automatically withdrawn from your designated account. The incidental account can be set up as automatic withdrawals or you may go in and pay when billed.

Please note if you need to reschedule a tuition payment you must contact Pam Franke 3 business days prior to the scheduled payment date.

Any questions regarding your FACTS account please contact Pam Franke, Business Manager at 410-272-1387 ext 217 or pfranke@stjoanarc.org

PBIS

PBIS reinforces positive behavior. SJA stands on the principles of respect, responsibility and leadership. [Click here](#) to learn more about PBIS. Teachers will provide parents with account information.

SJA School Calendar

All SJA events will be posted to the calendar located online on the school website. Please sync your device to this calendar. This is a live calendar so please check back weekly for updated events.

<https://stjoanarc.org/calendar/>

Media Release

As stated in the [Student/Parent Handbook](#), parents who do not want their child to participate in media opportunities are asked to notify the principal in writing by September 1.

Timeline for Grant/Aid and ReEnrollment

November 1 - FACTS (Grant and Aid) applications open

December 1- January 8th - ReEnrollment for Current families in School Admin

February 28 - FACTS 9 Grant and Aid) deadline

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is the online portal for reporting student progress in grades 3 -8. Teachers will provide parents with account information.

Extended Care

St. Joan of Arc School offers affordable before and after school care for families who have a need for this service. Hours are from 7:00 am until school begins and dismissal until 6:00pm on regular school days.

Care will be provided for early dismissal days until 4:00pm. [Click here](#) to register or email extendedcare@stjoanarc.org for more information.



STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Our school has adopted The “I Love U Guys” Foundation’s Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Students and staff will be training, practicing, and drilling the protocol.

COMMON LANGUAGE

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is based on an all-hazards approach as opposed to individual scenarios. Like the Incident Command System (ICS), SRP utilizes clear common language while allowing for flexibility in protocol.

The premise is simple - there are five specific actions that can be performed during an incident. When communicating these, the action is labeled with a “Term of Art” and is then followed by a “Directive.” Execution of the action is performed by active participants, including students, staff, teachers and first responders. The SRP is based on the following actions: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter.

HOLD

“In Your Classroom or Area”

Students are trained to:

- Clear the hallways and remain in their area or room until the “All Clear” is announced
- Do business as usual

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Close and lock the door
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



SECURE

“Get Inside. Lock outside doors”

Students are trained to:

- Return to inside of building
- Do business as usual

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Bring everyone indoors
- Lock the outside doors
- Increase situational awareness
- Account for students and adults
- Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN

“Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”

Students are trained to:

- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Recover students from hallway if possible
- Lock the classroom door
- Turn out the lights
- Move away from sight
- Maintain silence
- Do not open the door
- Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE

“To a Location”

Students are trained to:

- Leave stuff behind if required to
- If possible, bring their phone
- Follow instructions

Adults and staff are trained to:

- Bring roll sheet and Go Bag (unless instructed not to bring anything with them, dependent on reason for evacuation.)
- Lead students to Evacuation location
- Account for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.



SHELTER

“State Hazard and Safety Strategy”

Hazards might include:

- Tornado
- Hazmat
- Earthquake
- Tsunami

Safety Strategies might include:

- Evacuate to shelter area
- Seal the room
- Drop, cover and hold
- Get to high ground

Students are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies

Adults and staff are trained in:

- Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies
- Accounting for students and adults
- Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.



Dear St. Joan of Arc Families,

August 2023

On behalf of the St. Joan of Arc School Board, we would like to warmly welcome you to the 2023/2024 school year! We hope that you had a blessed summer and wish you a safe and fulfilling school year. The School Board is excited for the upcoming academic year and the amazing opportunities that it has in store.

As the Chairperson of the Board, and a prior school parent, I assure you that I remember well the myriad of emotions running through you and your household at this time. Among these emotions for me and my five children were: excitement, apprehension, a desire to get back into more concrete routines (at least for me!), yet the struggle to **return** to those routines; earlier bed times/wake up times, and making sure that the uniforms/shoes/supplies were ready to roll!

Please be assured that the SJA School Board is here to support the school, students, parents, principal, administration and faculty in any way that we can. The School Board's primary objective is to support St. Joan of Arc School's Vision & Mission:

Vision Statement

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School creates a vibrant 21st Century learning environment that infuses Catholic identity into every aspect of a curriculum focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

Mission Statement

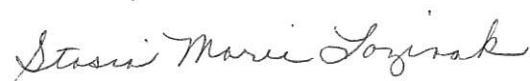
St. Joan of Arc Catholic School is a faith community of educators, learners, and families using God's gifts to develop 21st Century skills of innovation, collaboration, problem-solving, and reasoning to enrich the global society.

In addition to supporting the above Vision & Mission the School Board also monitors the schools finances, operations and strategic plan objectives throughout the year in accordance with the standards set forth by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The Board welcomes parent feedback, comments and suggestions so please feel free to reach out to us. At the School Board's last meeting, a primary agenda item was that the Board be more visible and accessible throughout the school year. As a Board, we look forward to meeting you!

I for one, chose St. Joan of Arc for its commitment to providing a Catholic education steeped in developing its student's faith journey and character development along with its academic excellence. Our SJA School Board consists mostly of former parents who entrusted their children to St. Joan of Arc and believe in the school.

The St. Joan of Arc School Board has great confidence in your Principal Dianne Kestler, and together with her, the schools' administrative team and faculty we look forward to another great year!

God bless,



Stasia Marie Lozinak

Chairperson of the St. Joan of Arc School Board

stasiamarielozinak@gmail.com

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