



St. Denis – St. Columba School

A Holy Ground of Loving and Learning

Family Newsletter



Week of April 27-May 1, 2020

Learning Together Apart

The unexpected transition to home-based distance learning has not been easy, but WE are doing it together: parents/guardians, students and teachers! Our students continue to learn. We have not lowered our academic standards, and we expect that our students will be ready to move up at the conclusion of the school year. We are proud of what we are doing together, especially when compared to some other schools/districts! There are many reasons we have had so much success so quickly. Our **teachers** have rapidly adapted to new teaching methods and new technologies, and have made themselves readily available to the students and parents/guardians. Our **students** guided by their parents/guardians have been diligently doing their assigned work and have demonstrated a commitment to continue to learn. Our **parents/guardians** have become our most important partners in education by monitoring their children's work, assisting them with assignments and ensuring that they attend "virtual school" every day. Our **PSA and generous benefactors** have made it possible over the years for SDSC to have many of the learning resources and ample technology available to us, especially Chromebooks. We have been able to loan out some of our Chromebooks so that our families have the means to continue to learn during this unprecedented time. Thank you!

Share Your Successes and Good News!



Whether you are a student, teacher, administrator or a parent, being forced to remain socially distant is difficult! We are collecting pictures and good news to share with one another. If you have any pictures, testimonials or stories to share, we would like to receive them. This is a time that will be an indelible part of the lives of our students forever. We will collect and share all of these memories with the SDSC School Community.

IMPORTANT: Textbook/Workbook Pick-Up

Parents/Guardians should stop by school to pick up the workbooks needed for the remainder of the school year. Teachers will be teaching the material covered in the workbooks, and students will be completing assignments in them. You may stop by the school any day Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. For the health and safety of all, please wear a face mask and respect social distancing guidelines. If your child is missing a textbook, you may also pick one up at that time. *Please note: the workbook pick-up is **NOT** an indication that we are not returning to the school building this year. We want students to have the materials they need to continue uninterrupted learning.*

New Schedule: "Special Fridays"

We are setting aside Fridays for two purposes: complete assignments for "Specials" and to catch up on work. Assignments for core subjects may be due on Fridays, but teachers will not be holding Zoom classes or assigning new work on Friday. Students should use the day to complete all the activities posted in their Art, Music, and Physical Education Google classrooms. These activities are not optional. They count and will be graded during this fourth marking period. Friday will also provide the students with an opportunity to "catch up" on any work not completed or that needs to be resubmitted for grading.



Chromebook Loans

Does your family have access to the technology you need for home-based distance learning? If you are in need of an extra Chromebook to facilitate learning or to attend Zoom classes among your children, please contact Sr. Kathleen at sr.kathleenmarie@gmail.com.

"Zoom" Meeting Safety

There has been a lot of information in the news about Zoom, a tool we use to teach your children digitally. Before we chose to use Zoom across the Archdiocese, the Office of the Superintendent of Schools worked with our Safe Environment Office and the Office of Legal Affairs. **We had proactively recommended many if not all of the education**

security measures which were then adopted by Zoom for educator accounts. We strongly encourage you to also review internet safety materials with your children, continue to monitor your children's online activities and have an open dialogue with them about internet safety. Click [HERE](#) to view the Archdiocesan statement regarding the use of ZOOM for home-based distance learning.

Planned Field Trips

Prior to the shutdown, we had scheduled and collected payments for field trips that were planned for all of our classes. We are working with all of the venues to reschedule those field trips on other dates. Some of those trips may occur this Fall, but we are committed to providing these “out of the classroom” learning experiences for our students. In the unlikely event that a field trip is permanently cancelled, parents/guardians who already paid will be refunded.



Your Questions About Tuition Answered

Why are we paying tuition for “home schooling”?

The Archdiocese is collecting tuition because we are still teaching and learning, albeit at a distance. The SDSC teachers have always worked hard, but they are really pushing themselves to keep our students on track and to successfully attain the information that they need to successfully move up. They are taking Professional Development classes to learn how to use new technologies and resources. They have made themselves available to students and parents/guardians in unprecedented ways. Everyone is working, including our administrative staff, and working hard for our students! Although tuition plays a major role in the operation of the school, it does not cover the cost of educating our students. We continue to strive to provide the very best education we can for your tuition dollars.

Will there be a tuition discount or refund?

Decisions regarding tuition are made by the Archdiocesan Office of Tuition Management and the Superintendent of Schools. Any decisions regarding discounts or refunds will be made in those offices. They have communicated with us that decisions regarding tuition will be **consistent** across a region or the entire school system. We do not have the authority at SDSC to discount or refund tuition because of the shutdown. Anything you may have heard to the contrary is false.



What if I need help paying tuition?

The Archdiocese has a limited amount of emergency tuition assistance available. If your family has been impacted by financially impacted by Covid-19 and you are unable to pay tuition, please contact us and we will help you file an application for relief. The Archdiocese has “turned off” late fees to assist with tuition payments.

You Have Questions! We Have Questions!



The widespread school closures have left our families with a lot of questions. Unfortunately, the only answer we have for most questions right now is that “We don’t know.” As decisions are made by the Superintendent of Schools, as well as state and local officials, we will continue to communicate that information as quickly as possible. The most recent updates and information can be found by following the link on the front page of the school website or by clicking the Covid-19 icon on the SDSC Smart Phone App. Please check your e-mail frequently and watch for notices to be posted on the school website. **Do not rely on social media or chat groups for accurate information!** You are always welcome to contact the school, and we will attempt to provide answers if we have them. Be assured that the well-being of our children and their families is (and always will be) what guides our future decisions.

Financial Aid for 2020-21 School Year



If you received financial assistance for the current school year and have been invited to re-qualify for the 2020-21 School Year, please note the following policies set forth by the Archdiocesan Office of Tuition Management:

- **Your application must be submitted no later than Friday, May 14th to be eligible for financial aid for the 2020-21 School Year.**
- **If you file your application for renewal after Friday, May 14th, any aid you may be eligible to receive will be automatically reduced, and may be denied in its entirety.**
- **If you fail to file an application for renewal, you will forfeit your financial aid for the 2020-21 School Year and beyond.**

Please do not wait until the last minute to file your renewal. During these uncertain times we may not be available to help you immediately. Help us help you reduce the cost of providing a Catholic education to your child(ren)!