



Back to School 2017

Points of Interest

- Class lists will be **emailed** and **posted** on the school doors on August 28th by 8:00 a.m.
- Our "Back to School Night" will be held on Tuesday, August 29th at 6:30 pm. We will begin in the church.
- Our school day begins at 7:50 am (bell rings at 7:45 am) and ends at 2:40 pm. Morning supervision begins at 7:15 am and after school supervision ends at 3:05 pm daily.
- We will begin the school year on Tuesday, September 5th. Students will be greeted outside at 7:40 am. It is a full day of school.
- Parent pick-up needed on Friday, Sept. 8th due to TCAPS 1/2 day

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Immaculate Conception Elementary School families,

With great excitement, I welcome you to the 2017-18 school year! I am honored and blessed to be serving as the Principal of Immaculate Conception Elementary as we partner together to help your children reach their fullest academic and spiritual potential. It brings me great joy to be part of this wonderful Catholic school system and working with you and your children. This year marks my 28th year in education and my 17th at GTACS. I have witnessed first-hand the powerful imprint this school system has had on my own two daughters who attended and are recent alumnae. We have an amazing group of faculty and staff who are busy preparing for meeting your children soon! A special welcome to our new staff members: Ms. Casey Droste-5th grade, Mrs. Mary Beth Myler-Reading Enrichment, and Mrs. Mary Salgat-Kitchen. We are blessed to have Fr. Anthony Citro and Fr. Christopher Jarvis ministering to our students.

Our school has seen many changes this summer with more to come! Our 3rd grade classes have been relocated over to Holy Angels as we prepare for the construction of our new pre-school-5th grade building. Our library and computer lab have been moved to the basement and our gym stage will serve as our music room. Our art classes will be "art on a cart" with our teacher visiting classrooms weekly during art time.

As the school year approaches, we implore Mary's help and seek her intercession. Under her watchful care we pray for our staff, students and families. This will be a historical year at Immaculate Conception with the building of a new school and we are privileged to be part of it.

Thank you for making the commitment to a Christ-centered education and entrusting your children to us. I look forward to seeing you all again this fall and can't wait to meet those of you that I don't know yet. Please take peace in knowing that your students will soon walk through our doors into the special protection of Our Lady and into the welcoming arms of a staff that truly loves Catholic education and understands God's call to serve in this unique ministry.

If you have questions as we prepare for the school year, feel free to call (947-1252) or e-mail mdeyoung@gtacs.org. Our awesome school secretary, Mrs. Krueger, is also available to answer questions you may have.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Mrs. Maureen DeYoung

CONSTRUCTION/CAR LINE:

With the exciting construction of our new school and road closures on West Front Street, we will have a new car line procedure to keep cars clear of the construction zone and students safe. Information will be emailed out soon and maps will be provided at the Back to School Night on August 29th.

It will be important for all parents to follow the new procedures so that we can load and unload students efficiently and safely.

Please have a sign with your child's last name printed in large visible letters that you can put in your windshield so that we can have students lined up and ready for pick-up at the end of the day.

In addition, our playground will be modified to accommodate for construction and ensure student safety at all times. More info to come at the Back to School Night and weekly newsletters.

Dates To Remember

August 21st:

Office open Monday-Friday 9 a.m. -2 p.m. (office will be closed on Monday, 8/28 for staff Mass and meetings and 8/30 for staff retreat)

Sept. 1st and 4th:

School offices closed for Labor Day weekend

Sept. 5th:

First day of school (full day)

Sept. 8th: All School Mass at 8:30 a.m. in the St. Francis Gym (all students are to be dropped off directly to Holy Angels/St. Francis and report to the Kohler Auditorium to meet their teacher)

Blessings to 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Brajak, and her husband as they welcomed Nora Christine into their family on June 13th. Nora weighed in at 7 lbs. 10 oz and was 21 inches long.

We have a new school address! It is no longer 218 Vine St., rather it is as follows:

314 Vine Street
Traverse City, MI
49684

(This will be the address of the new school, too).

August 29th Back to School Night-New Format

Our "Back to School" Night (formerly Open House) on August 29th will be a different format this year. We will begin in the church at 6:30 p.m. for 20 minutes for introductions and general school information and then each student/family will travel with their teacher to their respective class-

room where the teacher will give a brief 15-20 minute overview of the classroom, curriculum, expectations, etc. Afterwards, we invite everyone into the cafeteria to enjoy cookies and lemonade provided by our Parent Activity Council (PAC) to visit with other families and to visit the library, gym,

etc. It is our hope that this format will allow parents and students to learn more about their classroom for the upcoming year. We look forward to seeing everyone there!



Save the Date of October 13th for a special Mass and celebration for our IC students to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima.

4th Grade Information

Our 4th grade teaching team is comprised of:

- **Mrs. Stephanie Brajak**
Room 204
- **Miss Rachel Bott**
Room 205
- **Mrs. Lisa Hathaway**
Room 206
- **Mrs. Janine Winkler**
Room 207

Fourth grade is an exciting year as the social studies curriculum focuses around Michigan history. Students will be learning interesting facts about the Great Lakes State in which we live, and take part in an educational field trip at the AuSable Institute.

A highlight of 4th grade is the Saints projects on All Saints Day. Students research and dress as a saint.

Increased student responsibility becomes a strong emphasis for students and good organizational skills are important.

5th Grade Information

Our 5th grade teaching team is comprised of:

- **Ms. Casey Droste**
Room 102
- **Mrs. Sharon Taylor**
Room 103
- **Mr. Ben Beckwith**
Room 202
- **Mrs. Erin Bach**
Room 203

Our 5th grade students embark on a new year as being the leaders of our school. This theme will be constantly reinforced, as their peers in 4th grade look up to them.

Christian service will be reinforced in our religious curriculum as well as our annual signature service trip to

Feeding America in Grand Rapids. This trip helps our students to have a larger perspective on the needs of our state not just our local community.

Our 5th graders will have an educational science trip on the Inland Seas Schoolship this fall. More info to come!

Additional Staff Members and Classes

- **Mrs. Denise Krueger**
School Secretary
- **Mrs. Julie Forlenza, P.E.**
All grades attend P.E. class twice a week for 30 minutes.
- **Art**
All grades attend once a week for 45 minutes.
- **Mrs. Margaret Wilson, Library/Computers**
All grades attend library/computers once a week for 45 minutes. New this year will be keyboarding and basic computer skills as part of this time.
- **Spanish** Will be offered before and after school.
- **Music**
4th grade attends once a week for 30 minutes. 5th grade attends 3 times a week for 30 minutes (see below for more information)
- **Ms. Jennifer Newman Reading Support**
Works with students in small groups who may benefit from extra reading interventions.
- **Mrs. Jessica Kerfoot Math Support**
Works with students in small groups who may need extra academic support in math.
- **Mrs. Maria Elshaw Math Enrichment**
Works with students who need additional academic challenges in math.
- **Mrs. Mary Beth Myler Reading Enrichment**
Designed for students who need additional academic challenges in reading.
- **Mrs. Nancy Brown School Social Worker**
She works individually with students and families.
- **Mrs. Liz Primeau/Mrs. Mary Salgat**
Kitchen Staff providing nutritious lunches to our students

*Let us run to Mary,
and, as her little
children, cast ourselves
into her arms with a
perfect confidence.
--Saint Francis de
Sales*

Lunch Program

Our chef-prepared, healthy school lunch is \$3.35 per day which includes entrée, fruit, grain, vegetable and milk. If your child would like seconds or just the entrée, it is \$1.50. Students bringing lunch from home may purchase milk for 50 cents. **A reminder that lunch is not included in your student's tuition at Immaculate Conception.** You may begin funding your child's lunch account at any time. Checks made payable to GTACS can be dropped off at any school office. To view the monthly lunch menu, please visit gtacs.org under the "Parents" section.

5th Grade Music Information

Mr. Charles Taylor, our 5-12th grade Band Director, will be teaching 5th grade music with an instrumental emphasis. Students will begin first quarter with learning to play a recorder, which will culminate with a "Recorder Concert" in November for families followed by information about instru-

ment fitting for beginning band during the second quarter and remainder of the year. The 5th grade band culminates the year with playing at the Festival of the Arts concert in May. Mr. Taylor brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to our GTACS band program that is infectious to his stu-

dents. He was recognized as the 2016 "Teacher of the Year" by the Michigan Band and Orchestra Association for District 2. Under his direction, our high school band has taken top honors for the past three years at the State and District Festivals. You will be "wowed" by our 5th graders talents!

Extracurricular Activities

Students at Immaculate Conception have the option of participating in organized extracurricular sports throughout the school year. Students who participate must keep in mind that they are representing not only themselves, but their school, their community, their church, their parents and their team. A letter will also be sent home from our 4th-8th grade Athletic Director, Mrs. Julie Forlenza, detailing sports information in the near future.

We have also been blessed in recent years with outstanding parent volunteers to coach our Battle of the Books teams, as well as Boy Scouts and Hands of Faith program for girls. Availability of these programs and others is based upon commitment of parent volunteers.

All of our students are invited to participate in the Praise Choir, which meets twice a week after school. These students sing at our weekly Masses, as well as at the Festival of Arts in May.

Watch for our weekly newsletter called the IC Connection to learn more about extracurricular opportunities for your children.

Our weekly Mass is on **Wednesdays** (same as last year) at 8:15 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church. The school will also meet on various occasions for prayer services, Adoration, and to pray the Rosary. Please join us!

Bus Information

TCAPS will be responsible again this year for providing for our busing needs. Households that signed up for busing on their Registration Form will receive a postcard from TCAPS approximately one (1) week prior to the start of school. Look for this information to arrive at your home near the end of August. Should you have any questions concerning your child's route information please call TCAPS Transportation at the following number : 933-1956 (Aug. 29-Sept. 1st). Otherwise, call 933-1933.

School Supply Lists

School supply lists have already been e-mailed and are also posted on our website at gtacs.org

Please note that if you have a version that shows "class fees," those fees have now been removed.



"Because she belonged to Christ, Mary, our queen, is raised on high, a great sign for all who believe."

Math Classes

At Immaculate Conception, students are placed in differentiated math groups for 55 minute blocks daily. The goal of these groups is to instruct each student at his or her instructional level to ensure optimal growth in math skills.

Our mission statement states that we "develop each child to his or her fullest spiritual and academic potential"; therefore, by grouping our students, we can pace our math curriculum to fit the needs of students.

Keep an eye out early in the school year for a letter that lets you know who your student's math teacher will be during that 55 minute math block.

NWEA/MAP Testing

As many of you know, the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) test is a computerized, adaptive testing instrument used with students in grades 2 to 8. It is designed to provide two key measures to students and their educators: It identifies student instructional levels relative to a defined learning continuum, and it measures student academic growth over time. As such, it has great potential to directly affect instruction and student achievement.

Because the tests are adaptive and individualized, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude toward testing. MAP tests give us detailed, accurate information about your child's growth. We are then able to focus on every child's individual growth and achievement. Partnering to help all children learn, parents and teachers can have a profound positive effect on the academic achievement.

We have data from all the students who took the test last spring. In addition, all students will take the test this fall. Using this data we will be able to better target instruction to each child and also use it to ensure and measure annual growth from both fall to spring and spring to spring.

St. Joseph Club

After school care is available to all IC students in our lower level til 6 p.m. Monday-Friday. Sign-up for all ages can be done on a week-by-week basis; however, we are asking parents to commit by Thursday at 8 am for the week ahead. Families will be billed weekly for St. Joseph Club usage. St. Joseph's Club will also cover "snow days," certain parts of Christmas and spring breaks, and select professional development days. Separate sign-up will be required. The required paper work is available on our website and during Back to School Night on August 29th or any time after that.

SPANISH

Will be offered before or after school at Immaculate Conception. While foreign language instruction is very valuable, particularly in the early years, it must be balanced with the need for instruction time in even more critical areas. If you would like your child to participate in the Spanish elective, please complete the form that will be available during the first week of school. Spanish Students in grades 4 and 5 will meet three times a week and can choose the after school option from 2:45-3:15 pm or the before-school class from 7:15-7:45 am. Spanish Class will begin meeting in the third week of school.

School Uniform Code

All school uniform codes/guidelines are available on our website at gtacs.org as well as links within this email. Please review the elementary uniform code closely.

We cannot stress to you enough the importance of staying within the uniform code, as this emphasizes the uniformity within our school family. Thank you for your commitment to this detail.