

# St. Louis School Cardinal Post

Volume 8 Issue 1

July 2016

## Important Dates

Aug 8– Registration 8am-11am

Aug 8– Back to School Night (grades 1-6) 6:30pm-7:30pm

Aug 10– First Day of School (11:30 dismissal)

Aug 15– Feast of the Assumption (no school)

Aug 21– Men’s Club Mtg. 7:15pm (Clunan Center)

Aug 23– Home & School Mtg. 6:30pm (Clunan Center)

Sept 5– Labor Day (no school)

Sept 10– Men’s Club Appreciation and New Member Dinner 6:30pm (Clunan Center)

Sept 12– Fall Fundraiser packets due

Sept 20– Home & School/ Altar Guild Social 6pm (Clunan Center)

Oct 7– Professional Day (no school)

Oct 10– Fall Break (no school)

Oct. 16– Men’s Club Golf Tournament

Oct 23– Trunk or Treat 2pm (SLS Parking Lot)

Oct 25– Home & School Meeting 6:30pm (Clunan Center)

Our complete school calendar can be found on our website.

[www.stlouismemphis.org](http://www.stlouismemphis.org)

Dear St. Louis Families and Friends,

Summertime is a great time to relax, reflect, and rejoice! I hope all of you are having a great summer, enjoying time with family and friends, and relaxing a bit from all your labors during the year. As I reflect on school year 2015-16, I have to rejoice in our accomplishments as a school:

Began a one to one Chromebook program in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Now 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students have daily access to technology for research, creating, and other educational purposes

Had 2 of our graduates become De La Salle scholars at CBHS, 2 more graduates received scholarships from St. Benedict, and 8 graduates received St. Agnes Scholarships based on their exceptional performance on the High School Placement Test

Seven students received state recognition in the Duke TIP Search and 17, 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the Duke Talent Search (identifies top collegiate prospective future candidates)

Increased integration of technology throughout the curriculum

Put the entire registration process online

Implemented new science curriculum in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade

Began a new writing assessment in 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade

Used Discovery Assessment data to drive our curriculum to better meet the needs of individual students

Without the wonderful school and parish community working together so successfully, none of these great things could have happened.

We set goals every year to keep our school vibrant and moving forward. With input from faculty, parents, and students we have developed the following goals for school year 2016-17:

As a faculty we have decided to work toward not only being reaccredited by AdvancEd in the school year 2018 as we usually would, but also seek STEM certification that is offered

We are expanding our services for students with learning differences and for those who qualify for our gifted and talented program

Students in grades PK-4<sup>th</sup> will have weekly STEM labs provided by a company called Computer Explorers, which will correspond with the STEM units that their teachers will be providing. Fifth through eighth grade will have STEM labs quarterly provided by Computer Explorers along with other project based STEM activities planned by their teachers.

We will continue to work in collaboration with the high schools to ensure that our graduates, especially those who are highly motivated, receive a rigorous curriculum in Junior High, and are fully prepared for the honors track in high school.

We will construct a Parish and School community garden (“Cardinal Crops”) where students, teachers, and community members will work together to grow healthy vegetables that can be used for school lunches and possibly be donated to food programs for the poor.

It will take our entire school and parish community to continue to work together supportively to achieve our goals. I feel privileged and honored to be a part of this wonderful school community and I look forward to seeing everyone back in action in August.

May God bless all of you!!

Teddi Niedzwiedz

## St. Louis School Mission Statement

St. Louis Catholic School is committed to quality education in the spirit of Christ in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Working in partnership with parents and the community, we are dedicated to preparing our students for the future through faith formation and academic excellence utilizing progressive technology while enhancing students’ emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being.



# 4th quarter news

## Goldilocks and the Three Pigs

The SLS Drama Club, directed by Ray Mullins, performed for parents and students on March 17 and 18. The play was a delightful comedy for viewers and a great opportunity for drama club members. The cast and crew learned about building sets, memorizing lines, comedic timing, costumes, and all that is involved in a theatre production. We are so proud of these talented students!



Jump Rope for Heart & Hoops for Heart Winners:  
McKinley Kee, Johnny Drouillard, & Andrew Denegri



Outgoing Home & School President, Wesley Wade, introduces President Kristie Lyons and Vice President Benolyn Craig!



7th grade No Demerit Party  
in the Dining Hall Courtyard



## 5th Grade Goes to Biztown

Each year, fifth grade students participate in JA Biztown. The experience includes job interviews for each student, elections for Biztown Mayor and D.J., and a full day of working in a fully interactive simulated town facility. JA BizTown helps students connect the dots between what they learn in

Anna Kate Wade was voted Biztown Mayor by her peers!

school and the real world. Through the experiential learning process, students are actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, expressing curiosity, solving problems, and assuming responsibility. Special thanks to the teachers and all of the parent volunteers who made this field trip possible!



Gracie Leo, Will Moore, and Nolan Joyner are ready for their Biztown interviews!



Luke Flournoy with his grandparents at Preschool Grandparents' Day!

## H&S Auction Raises Big Bucks

The SLS Auction was a great success this year! Co-chairs, Benolyn Craig, Stacey Brown, and Victoria Disalvo worked with a team of volunteers to raise over \$100,000 for our school. The theme, Boas and Bowties, was fun for all who attended. Guests entered from a side door in true speakeasy style. Inside, a band played jazz music while attendees bid on class items in the silent auction. Later, dinner was served as bidders got into some pretty good bidding wars during the Live

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Mark you Calendars and plan to attend the 4th annual St. Louis Feast Day Picnic! The celebration will be held on the church grounds Sunday, August 28 at 1pm. All of our parish and school organizations work together to provide an afternoon of fun for the whole family! You won't want to miss it!!



Auction chairs, Stacey Brown, Benolyn Craig, and Victoria Disalvo

Thanks to all who attended, sponsored, and volunteered for this amazing event! It is always one of the

## SLS Track News

Our girls' track team was named the Shelby League 7/8 champions in the small schools division and runners up overall! Under the leadership of Coach Kelley



Grusin, our team performed at an impressive level this year. Both the boys' and girls' track teams were dedicated to working hard all season. We know our 8th grade graduates will shine in high school if they continue to participate in track! For the first time, cross country will be open to 3rd and 4th grade students for the 2016-17 school year. Send a registration form to the school office if your child would like to be a part of this growing program!!

## Cardinal 5K

The Cardinal 5K, benefitting SLS Home & School and Madonna Learning Center was a great event again this year! Co-chairs, Tammy Evangelisti, Kristi Pesce, and Julie Kate Webster did an amazing job. Thanks to all who participated, volunteered, and sponsored this year!!



Many of our younger Cardinals participated in the 1-Miler. Louis Strain was awarded 2nd place in his age group and 2nd place in the overall boys category!

## Welcome New Faculty & Staff

We are excited to introduce you to a few new additions to our faculty and staff and to announce a few faculty changes. We are expanding our learning lab and enrichment program so that we can better customize your child's learning experience. Mrs. Wendy will be the new lead teacher in KB and Mrs. Brasfield will be moving to Kindergarten as an assistant teacher. Mrs. Williams will be moving to 3rd grade and Mrs. Kirk will be moving to 5th/6th grade Social Studies and Religion.

## Erin Brick, Learning Lab 7-8

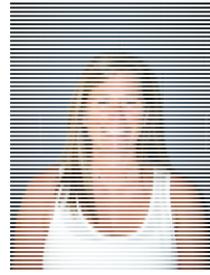


Hello! My name is Erin Brick and I am very excited to be the new 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade Learning Lab teacher and part of the SLS family! I graduated from the University of North Florida with a B.A. in Special Education. I also received my M.S. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Memphis. I have previously taught middle school in Florida and at Wooddale Optional Middle School and taught 7th-12th grade at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. My husband, Steve and I have 2 boys, Will and

Nate, who attend SLS. We enjoy boating and all things sports related. I look forward to the being part of the SLS faculty!

## Dena Soefker, JK Assistant Teacher

Hi, I'm Dena Soefker! My husband, Curt, and our family, have been members of St. Louis Parish for 17 years now. All 3 of our children are students at SLS, and my oldest, Emma, just graduated from 8th grade. My son Ethan is a rising 7th grader, and my youngest, Elizabeth, will be in 5th grade. I graduated from the University of Memphis with a Bachelor's of Science in Consumer Science and



Education (fancy for Home Economics); and then with a Master's of Arts in Teaching, with a concentration in Early Childhood Education. I taught first grade at Gordon Elementary, and then moved to St. Agnes Academy. After I started having children I took a bit of a hiatus to stay home with them. In 2012, I was ready to get back into teaching and started subbing at St. Louis. I have subbed over the years in PK-3rd grade and even did interim positions in JK and Kindergarten last year. I recently worked part time at Richland Elementary as a reading interventionist, but I knew my calling was to be back in a Catholic School setting...especially at St. Louis, where I consider this "home". When I'm not driving my kids to and from activities and school, I have a passion for cooking, cycling, yoga, and painting. I am excited for this new chapter and I'm looking forward to meeting the new Junior Kindergarteners!

## Nancy Gordon, Soaring

Nancy Gordon comes to St. Louis with experience as a gifted teacher in Memphis City Schools CLUE program. She also held numerous teaching/ seminar positions with Southwest Community College. Her last teaching experience was as a Title I tutor with Shelby County Schools at St. Anne's Highland. She has four married children and 5 grandchildren. Welcome, Mrs. Gordon, to SLS!!



## Jill Mullen, Language Arts 5-6

Hello! My name is Jill Mullen and I am incredibly excited to be teaching 5th and 6th grade Language Arts at St. Louis. I graduated from the University of Mississippi with an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education with a concentration in English grades 7-12. I also received a Master of Science in Teacher Education from the University of Tennessee Knoxville. This upcoming school year will be my 9th year in education. Most recently I was a 7th grade Language Arts teacher at Desoto Central Middle School for 6 years. My husband, Chris and I have 2 children, Wade and Cooper. I enjoy spending time with my family (several of whom are also educators) and reading a good book at every available opportunity. As a graduate of the Memphis Catholic Diocese school system, I am thrilled to be joining the St. Louis Faculty and look forward to the upcoming school year!



Like our Facebook page, (St. Louis Catholic School Mphs, TN), for the latest SLS news and updates!



### **Erin Van Epps, Learning Lab K-4**

Hello all! My name is Erin Van Epps and I'm very much looking forward to joining the Learning Lab team for K-4 at SLS. I graduated from Rhodes College with a degree in history and from the University of Memphis with a Juris Doctorate and a Master's of Arts in Teaching -- with a concentration in Special Education. I also taught Special Ed in public schools in Indiana and Shelby County and worked for the Catholic Diocese of Memphis at St. Anne Highland and St. Patrick's. My husband, Michael, and I have two children, Casey and Drew, who are in second and third grade, respectively, at SLS. Michael and I also both attended SLS as kids. My hobbies include reading, sewing, and all things Disney. I'm so excited about joining the SLS family!



### **Paul Nickl, IT**



Hi! I'm Paul Nickl. I was born and raised here in Memphis. I graduated from SLS many, many moons ago then went to CBHS and Memphis State. I've spent over 20 years of my professional career in corporate IT at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLC, Regions Financial Corp, Morgan Keegan & Co., Raymond James Financial, etc. I'm an outdoors kind of guy- camping, hunting, backpacking, whitewater kayaking, snow skiing, etc. Being a Jeep owner kind of defines my character. I'm not married, but I'm

dating a one-in-a-million girl that's an IT Project Manager at Raymond James. I've been a Reserve Firefighter with Germantown Fire Dept. since 1996. I have a black lab named Mal that's almost entirely made of slobber and wagging tail. I'm looking forward to working here at my alma mater!

### **Yesenia Ragghianti, School Counselor 5-8**

¡Hola! My name is Yesenia Ragghianti. I am blessed to be joining the St. Louis School Family as the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade School Counselor. I was born and raised in Houston, Texas. I graduated from the University of Houston with a Bachelor's of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies with a specialization in Educational Psychology



and a Master's of Science in Counseling. I have approximately 11 years of experience helping children in schools, the last five years as an Elementary School Counselor and the previous six years as a Special Education Teacher. I recently married and moved to Memphis with my husband, Kevin. We enjoy traveling, nature, and spending time with our family and Madison, our sweet Boxer dog. I am ready and excited to meet my entire school family and have an incredible school year together.

### **Saying Goodbye to the SLS 8th Grade Class of 2016**

Many activities are planned for SLS 8th graders each year. It is a special year for SLS students, whether they joined us in preschool, in junior high, or any grade in between. In 2016, students visited Washington D.C., had the first ever "no-demerit party" in the Dining Hall Courtyard, crowned Mary at the May Procession, had lunch with our priests at the rectory, built a prosthetic arm with our 3-D printer, and so much more!! We will miss the class of 2016 and we wish them the best in high school and beyond. We are so proud of this talented group of students and look forward to hearing what they accomplish in the future!



### **Welcome New Families**

We are happy to welcome several new students into our SLS family! Please encourage your children to help these new students feel at home. If you are interested in getting involved with the Home & School Cardinal Connect committee, please email Carol Sweeney or Kim Pesce at [kpesce@stlouismemphis.org](mailto:kpesce@stlouismemphis.org). All are invited to pack a lunch and stay for a family picnic on the first half day of school (Wednesday, August 10.) We hope you will join us under the new picnic pavilion to welcome our new families!

<b>New to our family:</b>	Ella Tait	Abby Griffith	Abby Pyrdom
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Alice Thompson	Walker Billions	Macy Burr
Finch Avant	Thompson Winchester	William Fruechtenicht	<b>7th grade</b>
Eliza Billions	Addie Wiseman	Madelyn Sutherland	Hudson Tollison
Sydney Davis	<b>1st grade</b>	<b>4th grade</b>	Jake Herbison
Layla Hochhauser	Ella Rose Brown	Ethan Spencer	Chandler Jackson
Cannon Jewell	Kaleb Crangle	John Inman	William Keith
Joseph Labonte	Olivia Fruechtenicht	<b>5th grade</b>	Jameson Pugh
Hadley Lynch	Palmer Sullivan	Cesar Alvarez	<b>8th grade</b>
Rebecca Pendley	<b>2nd Grade</b>	John Goodwin	Preston Barber
Luke Roman	Sam Goodwin	<b>6th grade</b>	<b>Welcome to our new PK &amp; JK families and to returning students: Bradley Mendel, Knox Perry, Ada Grace Perry, Lucy Perry, and Annie Perry!!</b>
Luca Sowell	<b>3rd grade</b>	Nicolai Buchignani	
Scarlett Steadman	Ellie Bender	Tomas Pantik	