



**Sharon M. Garcia, Principal     Janice L. Carr, Assistant Principal**

August 6, 2021

Dear SFX Community,

I hope all of you had time to enjoy family and friends and created some special memories this summer! We are all excited to return to school on Tuesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. (PS 3 and PreK 4 return on the 25<sup>th</sup>). This past year and a half has been challenging and I strongly believe, as a school community, we met that challenge and did what was right for the safety and well-being of our kids. We observed happy kids interacting and learning everyday, wearing masks and following all of the protocols that were in place. Children are very adaptable and they knew what they had to do and they did it without much complaint. Faculty and staff continually challenged themselves to use their skills and incorporated new skills to create a successful learning experience in unprecedented times. I was constantly impressed and amazed at the dedication and creativity of the entire school and parish staff as we all thought of ways to make the educational experience a success at SFX. The parents of SFX jumped in to show unwavering support and appreciation throughout the year.

Now it is time to look forward to a new year! The school year of 21-22 will start off with some protocols in place, but as the guidance allows we will begin to return to what we know worked best prior to Covid 19. We will also take what we know has worked the past year and a half and use this knowledge to create the best educational experience for our students.

- I am sure by now you have all heard the Governor's mandate, announced this past week. Therefore, effective immediately all staff, students and visitors will be required to wear a mask in all common areas when they enter the building regardless of vaccination status.
- We will also continue to practice social distancing in the classroom and lunchroom as we space students 3 ft. nose to nose and maintain a distance of 3 ft. as much as possible throughout the day.
- Students should still bring filled water bottles to school. Water fountains will not be used for drinking purposes, however, we do now have bottle-fillers throughout the building.
- Hand sanitizer will be used when students are entering the building and when they enter other new spaces during the day.

- Building sanitization will continue daily, as was done last year.

To begin the 2021-2022 School Year:

- No one will need to wear masks when they are outside of the building.
- We will be returning to our full-day schedule: M, T, Th, F 8:00 am - 3:15 pm and 2:00 pm dismissal on Wednesdays.
- Sports will be returning with protocols in place for indoor sports, which include spacing and wearing a mask.
- Band will return with protocols in place.
- We will have use of our gym for PE classes.
- We will not be in cohorts. Teachers will be able to use some small group strategies in the classroom and students will be able to move around the building more freely.
- iArts classes will have their own classrooms that students will travel to as appropriate.
- Students will be able to use lockers.
- We will not be offering full-time remote learning this year. We are excited to welcome all students back to school full-time.
- Remote learning in some synchronous or asynchronous format may be instituted for school mandated quarantines for close exposure or positive Covid results. Remote learning will not be available for travel quarantines or absences for other illnesses.
- We will return to wearing SFX uniforms. Please view the uniform code in the handbook on our website. Summer uniforms can be worn until October 15th. A uniform Grab & Go will be scheduled before school and information will be coming soon.
- Gatherings can begin taking place with certain protocols to be followed when indoors.
- We can attend mass together in larger groups.

As we continue the year and receive updated information from the Archdiocese and other health agencies, appropriate changes will be made.

We have been interviewing throughout the summer. We are excited to welcome new staff, returning staff and staff in new places this coming year. We are continuing to interview for a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and a middle school math teacher. The teaching shortage has affected many schools. We will remain diligent and continue to try and find the right person for SFX . We will have qualified people in place to take the classes at the beginning of the school year. After almost 15 years of service and dedication to the SFX Athletic Program, Tammy Bauer has decided to resign from her position as our Athletic Director. We are pleased to announce that Tim Flynn, our PE teacher, will be our new AD. Tammy and Tim will be working to make this transition as we begin the 21-22 sports season. We thank Tammy for the time and talent she has given to the athletes and families at SFX!

Communication regarding the format for Parent Information Nights and other important information regarding the start of the school year will be sent home in the coming weeks. Class Lists will be emailed home on August 18th.

I know that some of you may not be pleased with some of our reopening news. I hope we will continue to work as a team and do our best to create a positive experience for our children. Please encourage your child to meet disappointment or things they do not like as a challenge, a challenge that they will meet successfully. Encourage them to talk about their worries and frustrations so that we can continue to guide them to an understanding that everything may not always go the way that we want, but we will all be okay. It is important for us, as adults, to discuss our personal frustrations and beliefs in private so that our children are not conflicted. We need to explain that we all need to look at the big picture and the safety of all.

As a school community we did something amazing last year!! I know 21-22 will also be amazing and our children will have a positive educational experience because we support each other and we do what we do for them. We continue to be in this together and we will once again prove that at SFX We are Better Together!

Be Well and God Bless!

*Sharon M Garcia*