



“A community of like-minded people, who have the same purpose can set goals and change the world.

At St. Stephen Catholic School we are a Family brought together by our faith in the Lord and our purpose of educating our children as future leaders of this world and saints in the next. “– Principal Oliver

July 17, 2020

Dear St. Stephen School Families,

This unprecedented summer has been both a gift and a challenge, just as I am sure that it has been for many school administrators across the country. Oddly enough, the gift has been the challenge and the opportunity to refine our focus in on what we really believe as a school family. What are our root beliefs and how will they guide us to find solutions and set goals? It is in finding our “Whys?” that we will purpose our “How?”, set our goals and work together to achieve them. This clarity of purpose is truly what sets us apart. I am truly blessed to work with such amazing teams and committees (The Leadership Team, Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools, Fr. Bert and the Parish Staff, and several other committees /stakeholders) of dedicated people who love our school and who join all of us as we walk on this journey together.

We believe that in our St. Stephen School community, we are a family. Everyone in our community takes care of each other to ensure that every child flourishes.

We believe that we are made for each other. We love each one of you and each one of your children, and we are confident that we can provide an excellent education, both academically and in the faith, while safeguarding each member of our community. Just as Christ calls us to stop everything to protect one lost lamb from harm, we will do what it takes to take care of each other, and we will be stronger for it.

We are always learning. In humility, we recognize that the public health situation may change rapidly between now and the start of school, just as it has since we last gathered in person in March. We also recognize that scientists are learning more about the virus and its spread, and the precautions we take will reflect both our learning and the current public health situation. Starting today, we will communicate with you every two weeks—more frequently if necessary—to ensure you are aware of our most current plans and any changes we make. We are always learning – about the virus, its transmission, and our community’s vulnerability—and we will adjust our plans as needed to ensure each child flourishes.

How will do this? Throughout the summer the Leadership Team and I have been working with the Archdiocese of Denver Catholic schools and the Garfield County Health Department to create a plan. While the details of the plan are extensive, we can distill it down to these three steps:

1. Cleaning and Sanitation –

We believe that we are a community of charity and solidarity, called to seek and protect the good, safety, health, and well-being of our children, families, and teachers, especially the most vulnerable in our community (i.e. the elderly or immunocompromised). Our children and our community cannot flourish if

the virus does. Our goal is to protect every member of our community. We will adopt precautions that are known to reduce the potential for virus transmission in our school community.

*We have ordered a Clorox T360 Electrostatic Sprayer Power Wrap to clean and disinfect our school, church, and buses. This powerful air compressor fog wraps around all surfaces, front back and sides, to kill 99.9% of bacteria, including Corona Virus in 2 minutes or less. Using this machine, along with wiping surfaces down with disinfectant will help to keep the viruses at bay. We will be sanitizing rooms, common areas and buses after each use.

*Our amazing cleaning crew will continue to keep our school clean and sanitary using EPA approved products. We will also be cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day.

2. Limiting our class sizes –

We learn better together. We believe that community is the best way to form children and allow them to flourish. We also believe that adults set the tone for students to be adaptable and resilient. We believe students succeed when they are loved, heard, protected, and challenged.

Our plan is to return to school in the building, as we always do. The first day of class will be August 24. Our mission to ensure that your child flourishes compels us to take all necessary precautions to minimize the spread of COVID-19 within our community.

Given the current public health conditions, we have put some precautions in place which include putting a limit on our class sizes to maintain 6 ft. of social distancing in all our classrooms to keep our students and staff safe. Students and staff will be wearing masks whenever we cannot assure 6 feet of social distancing. We are blessed that Fr. Bert and our parish community will be allowing us to consistently have classes in the Parish Hall, this additional square footage will allow us to spread our students out. Other precautions will include having lunch in the classroom and possibly putting acrylic shields in some spaces. We will also be practicing social distancing and using acrylic shields on our buses. We have been working closely with our local Public Health Department and our reopening plan is filed with the Garfield County Public Health Department. *Because we learn better together, and we are confident that we can provide an excellent education, in academics as well as the faith, while safeguarding each member of our community.*

Currently, we have only a few spots for new students in the following grades: kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade, and 8th grade. If you know of a family that would like to join our school, please share our contact information with them. We would be glad to share our plan with them.

3. Partnering with our Families –

We believe that in our St. Stephen School community, we are a Family. Everyone in our community takes care of each other to ensure that every child flourishes.

We all know that kids learn better when they are with their teachers and peers; and while we did a fantastic job at distance learning last spring, we would all rather be in our classrooms learning. Our students have missed their friends and teachers; we have missed them too.

We have asked our parents, students, and staff to partner with us in keeping our school community safe. Diligently, we are working together as a school family to safeguard each member of our community.

We are a School Family. This belief, and the latest scientific understanding of how the virus travels and infects individuals, will guide our decisions about which precautions to adopt. While children may not generally be sickened by the virus, they can carry and transmit it without symptoms. A student may carry it to school and transmit it to a classmate, who can bring it home and infect family members. While neither of these students may ever experience the illness, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other family members who live with our students who are susceptible to the disease may become seriously ill.

While we pray for a year of in-person instruction at school for all, if the public health situation in our community requires that we make use of a backup plan to protect your children and our team, we will not hesitate to do so, just as we did not hesitate to close the building in March.

We also recognize that some of our families have members with compromised immune systems. We do not want these children to miss out on Catholic education and we still want them to be part of our community. Thanks to our Archdiocese, we now have the option of an online school, St. Isidore. Please let us know if you are interested in this option and we will fill you in on the details.

HERE'S THE COVID19 REOPENING SCHOOL - PRECAUTIONS PLAN UPDATE

As shared a couple of weeks ago, the Leadership Team and I have been working closely with the Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools Office, the Garfield County Public Health Department and Centura Health to collect information to help guide us in making informed decisions about our reopening plan, which was approved by Garfield County Public Health.

We have had several families reaching out to us for more information regarding our Reopening Plan Precautions. Thank you for your excellent questions. Here are some questions that a parent recently sent us, and I think that everyone will be interested in the responses.

Q: My concerns are the very potent chemicals used daily around our children. Will the school be aired out? Since this is "Airborne" why are air purifiers not being put in each classroom.

A: Yes, we are so blessed to have an outside door in each classroom, as well as windows that open. We have already told teachers to keep the windows open and aired out. Anna, our janitorial supervisor, will be airing out the rooms after we have run the sanitizing machine each evening. I have also reached out to our supplier for the chemical breakdown of what is in the solution that the Clorox T360 Electrostatic Sprayer Power Wrap machine uses. I will share that with you once I have those details. By the way, Ana and our supplier have done an amazing job of keeping us supplied with the COVID

We have not looked into air purifiers yet, as we've been focused on cleaning and sanitation supplies and equipment. However, we can take a look at them.

Q: Will the sanitation stations be FDA approved? They released a list of over 50 very toxic hand sanitizers. Can the children just wash their hands 1x an hour no matter what.

A: The Garfield County Public Health Department says that soap and water hand washing is best; we will be encouraging frequent handwashing throughout the day.

We will also be using touchless, hand sanitizing stations when needed. I have a call into our cleaning supply representative to find out if the product for our touchless dispensers is FDA approved. I will let you know.

Q: What will the classroom days look like?

As we all know, and humbly must admit, we are all learning about this virus together. It is hard for us to predict exactly what a school day will look like over a month from now. However, if school were to start

tomorrow, students will enter and exit the building through the exterior door in their classrooms. We will stagger when they enter and exit to avoid big groups. Their movement will be limited to mostly inside their classrooms and outside the building. In their classrooms, they will be assigned seats/desks that are socially distanced 6 ft apart, while at their desks they will not need to wear their masks. Students will need to wear their masks if we cannot guarantee the 6 ft of social distancing. (I know that the governor just announced a Face Mask Order - I have a call into the Garfield County Health Department for clarification on the effect of the ruling for our school.) When the children need to use the restroom, they will wear their masks and the number of students allowed in the restroom at one time will be based on the number of sinks in the restroom. They will eat lunch in their classrooms. Recess will be outside at Sayre Park, with their classmates in an assigned area. Specials teachers will move from classroom to classroom to provide instruction. PE will be held outside; students will not be dressing out for PE. All teachers will be wearing face masks and face shields. We will be using clear shields in places in the classroom, especially in small group instruction and on the buses.

We are planning to move 4th and 5th grades to the Parish Hall, with the divider walls pulled and areas screened off, to use as their classrooms. This additional square footage will allow us to better socially distance all of our students and provide more restroom facilities.

There will be a section of the Parish Hall screened off to use for the After-School Program. Only the children in that program will be using that space.

Q: If a child is sick. Will they be required to get tested in order to return to school? If we as parents do not want our children test, what does that look like?

A: As of June, the CDC was saying that children ages 3 to 17 are not as likely to get COVID19 as people who are in older age groups; however, that doesn't mean that they still can't carry and spread the disease. We, as a school family, are committed to doing our best to protect our teachers and families too.

We have purchase touchless thermometers to take every child and staff members temperature before they enter the buses or the building. We are asking for parents to wait for a "thumbs up" okay of their child's temperature is normal before they pull away in their cars. We will also be asking parents to complete and submit a checklist of symptoms each day, to keep vigilance on their child's health.

If a child should get sick at school, I have given up my office to be the "sick room" to keep children who are not feeling well away from others, while they wait for their parents to pick them up. We know that not all sickness will be COVID19 and unless students demonstrate those specific symptoms, we will not be asking for them to get tested.

If a student or teacher should display symptoms of COVID19, we ask that they contact their primary care provider to get checked out. If their doctor suspects that they are infected with COVID19, we ask that the family report that information to the school. In an effort to protect each other and keep everyone safe, we would then quarantine that class to stay at home for online/distance learning for two weeks. The Health Department currently says that those who have been exposed will usually display symptoms within two weeks of exposure; they also say that minimally there needs to be an additional 48 hour wait period, with no symptoms, before coming out of quarantine.

Q: Will the children be e-learning if they are sent home to quarantine for 2 weeks?

A: Yes! If a student gets sick, the teacher will convert their classroom instruction to online/distance learning. Also, we are asking all teachers to plan four weeks ahead just in case it is the teacher who gets sick; if that is the case, a substitute-teacher will teach class, online until the teacher recovers.

Please send us your questions. Let us keep the dialogue going. As a school family we care for each other and we do not want to make assumptions or live in fear. We are here to protect and serve each other.

NUTS AND BOLTS – HERE ARE THE USUAL ESSENTIALS THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO START THE SCHOOL YEAR

As the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year approaches, it is time for us to start preparing ourselves for the upcoming school year. Attached you will find your school supply lists, information on uniforms and other important information. The school calendar and supply lists will also be available, soon, at our new website address. We will send that new website address out as soon as possible.

Below you will find information and important dates that will help to make your transition into the school year and beyond smoother.

INFORMATION THAT YOU NEED BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

St. Stephen Catholic School Faculty Members for 2021-2021 include:

Pastor – Fr. Bert Chilson

Parochial Vicar – Fr. Jean Marie

Principal – Mrs. Glenda Oliver

Asst. Principal & Third Grade Teacher – Mrs. Gissela Dillow

Business Manager – Mrs. Krysta Brubaker

Administrative Assistant – Mrs. Rocio Sandoval

School Billing – Mrs. Leidy Ruiz

Preschool Director – Ms. Thae Dunn

Preschool Lead Teacher - Ms. Susanna Perez

Kindergarten – Mrs. Lisa Noteboom

First Grade – Mrs. Sarah Kidwell

Second Grade – Mrs. Christine Godfread

Third Grade – Mrs. Gissela Dillow

Fourth/Fifth Grade – Mr. Kerry Karamaroudis (English Language Arts and Social Studies)

Fourth/Fifth Grade – Mrs. Laura Carter (Math, Science and Religion)

Middle School English Language Arts – Mrs. Suzanne Kirch

Middle School Math & Science– Mr. Joe Mollica

Middle School Social Studies and Religion – Mr. Paul Dudley

Art – Mrs. Dara Barth

Music – Mr. Doug Gelpi

P.E. – Mrs. Debbie Cook

Spanish – Mr. Paul Dudley (Middle School Spanish) and Mrs. Thae Dunn (PK-5th Spanish)

Teaching Assistants – Mrs. Christine McSwain and Mrs. Diane Steuben

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

The School Office is closed in July. Please drop your payments off at the Parish Office, mail them or send them electronically through FACTS. However, we will be checking voicemails, emails and making appointments as needed. We will resume our new hours (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) on August 5th. However, all staff members will be away on retreat on August 18th and the office will not be open.

WE UPDATED RENWEB/FACTS STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM THIS SUMMER TO INCLUDE RENWEB / FACTS TUITION PAYMENT SYSTEM- YOU ARE ABLE TO CHECK YOUR CHILD'S GRADES AND MAKE YOUR TUITION PAYMENTS IN ONE PLACE

Streamlining Communication – to make all our communication (emails, billing, report cards, discipline notices, etc.) available in fewer places we are using Renweb/Facts Student Information System. We will continue to use Classroom Dojo for their translation capabilities.

MAKE YOUR TUITION PAYMENTS WITH FACTS

This year we are using the FACTS tuition management service. Please sign up for this service by following the link <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/463XK> to guide you to go to scsglenwood.org home page, or drop by the front office and Mrs. Sandoval can help you.

It is imperative that tuition payments are made according to the payment contract you signed, so that we can handle our business operational needs. Tuition covers approximately 80% of our employee salaries and benefit costs. Our parents maintain the payment process and we appreciate that effort. Late payments jeopardize the payroll, which dictates a systematic monthly cost and must be adhered to with no exceptions.

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND DAILY STARTING AND ENDING TIME

The updated 2020 - 2021 school calendar is attached and posted on our website.

School will resume on Monday, August 24, 2020. The school hours are 8:15 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. There will be a few exceptions throughout the year when we have early release days. Please check the monthly calendars to make sure that you are aware of these dates and times.

During the first weeks of schoolteachers and students are establishing their rules, routines and procedures. This is important work in that it will make the rest of year go smoothly. Please help your child by making sure that they get back into their routines quickly. You may even want to consider reestablishing school bedtimes for at least two to four weeks prior to the beginning of school. On average, it takes the human body four weeks to adapt to a new routine. Thus, something as small as establishing your child's school year bedtime prior to returning to school can help to set them up for success.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

At St. Stephen our uniforms are an important part of our identity. We believe that uniforms help to level the playing field and bring unity to our school. Thus, it is important that we all comply to the uniform policy that you will find enclosed with this letter.

We ask that you purchase the bulk of your uniforms through Lands' End. <http://www.landsend.com/pp/SchoolSearch.html?selectedSchoolNum=900055260&action=landing>.

Through this company, not only do you get the uniforms that your child needs, but also our school gets a

small percentage of the proceeds. It's a win-win situation. When you order, please put in our school's Lands' End code 900055260. This will not only ensure that you have the correct items but also guarantee that our school gets the kickback. The burgundy shirts are only available through Lands' End. The girls' Dunbar plaid skirts and jumpers are only available through Dennis Uniforms. The school code is CDC. <http://www.dennisuniform.com/onlstore/ShowSchoolCatalog.asp?sc=CDC&dis=12573692>.

Please let-the uniform companies know that you are from St. Stephen and they have a list of the approved styles. This year, we will again be selling hoodie-sweatshirts with the St. Stephen-logo. We will be taking orders for these in September and again in November. ***The St. Stephen logo-hoodies are the only hoodie-sweatshirts allowed.*** Students will be asked to take off all other, non-uniform sweatshirts just as they have been in the past. Navy crew-neck sweatshirts, uniform- navy cardigans and vests, navy fleece vests and jackets are also acceptable.

Please note that all pants and shorts must be khaki. Stonewash, jeans and cargo pant and shorts still do not comply with the uniform code. All belts must be brown or black leather or manmade leather; mesh and web belts still do not comply. Additionally, all shoes must be predominantly brown, black or blue; predominantly white sneakers are also okay.

PE Uniforms (required in grades 4th – 8th) will not be required until further notice; students will not be changing clothes for PE this year, due to COVID19 restrictions.

A **used uniform sale** will be held on Thursday, August 13th and Friday, August 14th from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Parents may drop off used uniforms to sell any time prior to August 13th. We ask that you donate your gently worn uniforms toward the sale; all proceeds from the sale will go toward our technology fund. The used uniform tables will also be set up during the first week of school if any items are still available. In anticipation of children growing, we will have another used uniform sale in January 2021.

COMMUNICATION

WEBSITE AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Our communication tools still include our website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Class Dojo, Flocknote, newsletters, and emails. The newsletter will be coming out every two weeks; updates will be sent out as needed via Flocknote. Please make sure to sign up for Flocknote to get important school notifications.

Flocknote is our main communication tool and it is how we let you know what is going on at school. We have taken the liberty of entering your email and cell phone numbers into Flocknote. If you are not receiving messages at least weekly, please contact Mrs. Sandoval in the front office 970-945-7746.

We post fun pictures of students and school events on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Please consider following us on social media and encourage your friends and family to follow us too.

TWICE A MONTH NEWSLETTERS

Our newsletters will be available on our website, as well as by email or hard copy if preferred. If you need a hard copy, please contact Mrs. Sandoval in the front office 970-945-7746. The website address is changing, and we will be sending that new address soon.

CALENDARS ARE SENT OUT YEARLY AND MONTHLY

FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL

KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION AND THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING -

THE ANNUAL WELCOME BACK, POTLUCK DINNER is postponed until further notice.

Classroom Back to School Night will be offered via Zoom this year on Thursday, August 20th at 5:00 p.m., the second rotation will begin at 5:30 p.m. for those families that have more than one child. We invite you and your children into the classrooms to visit with teachers 1st- 8th and go over classroom expectations for the school year. This is a great opportunity to learn about classroom management, expectations, and parent responsibilities.

All teacher/parent meetings will be conducted via Zoom as a COVID19 precaution.

The Annual Welcome Back, Business Meeting be recorded and a link to this annual meeting will be sent out via Flocknote on August 20th.

KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

We will be hosting a Kindergarten Orientation Zoom Meeting at 5:00 p.m. on August 19th.

VIRTUES IN PRACTICE /VIRTUE-BASED RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

At St. Stephen we use the *Virtues in Practice* program that was developed by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecelia. We view our Catholic school's task as basically bringing together culture, faith and life. We work toward this task by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught, in the light of the Gospel, and through growth of the virtue's characteristic of a Christian. At St. Stephen we strive to integrate the virtues into all that we do.

We practice Virtue-Based Restorative Discipline which involves teaching/guiding students through conflict resolution skills, taking responsibility for actions, and collaborating to restore the balance of justice by making wrongs right. We believe that our students are capable of great things and that by holding them to high standards, knowing that as humans we all will sometimes falter or fail and that through guiding them with faith, hope and love we can help them to achieve all that they can be here on earth and in heaven. Our wish is for our students is to be not only the best *in* the world, but also the best *for* the world.

This year's virtue theme is *Study and HOPE – Trusting in God's loving plan*. Beginning in September, there will be a virtue and three saints to study each month. Your child's teacher will be sending home interactive worksheets for you and your student to work on together. We are hoping that this "virtue homework" will help to spark discussions at home that will assist you in sharing your faith with your child. Quarterly at the Honor and Virtue Award Assembly, we celebrate virtuous living by giving students who have excelled in virtue, awards for acting in virtuous ways.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

We are so excited to continue our After-School Program Monday through Friday from 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. If you are interested in your child attending the after-school program, registration forms and further details will be available at the school office. There is an additional charge of \$7.00/hour for this service.

ST. STEPHEN PRESCHOOL

If you are interested in our preschool program, for children 3-5 years old, please contact Ms. Thae Dunn at 945-7746 for information. Our high-quality preschool is not only licensed and certified with the state of

Colorado it also meets Colorado Shines standards as well as Advance Ed criteria. Additionally, as a St. Stephen preschool family, you are placed on a preferential list that improves your chances for school admittance. We do have a limited number of CCAP spaces available.

BUSES

We will have buses running routes from Basalt and from Rifle. Please notify the School Office if you plan to have your child ride the bus. In order to meet the COVID19 health precautions, we will have to make some adjustments to the bus, such as limiting the number of bus riders and putting plastic shields in place. We will set the bus schedule based on what is needed. The bus schedule will be released as soon as we have determined what the need is.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION TUTORING PROGRAM

We are committed to providing all our students an excellent education. We have additional academic support available for students- Please talk to your child's teacher if you have concerns about your scholar's academics and/or if your child currently is or has been on an IEP, ISP, 504 or SLP. Let's get the conversation started so that we can work together to set our young scholars up for success.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Marti DuPrey is our licensed, Catholic counselor. Please let your child's teacher know if you would like to refer your child to counseling. Teachers, Parents and Administrators are all eligible to refer a student to counseling.

We also work with Ms. Erin Quinn of Mind Springs Counseling to provide small group counseling at our school. Students learn to constructively work through conflicts and to respectfully advocate for themselves and others.

HOT LUNCH

We will not be offering Hot Lunch until further notice. However, we will still have individual cartons of milk (plain and chocolate) for sale or preorder. Please order milk through Mrs. Sandoval in the Front Office.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AND UPCOMING EVENTS (EVENT DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

ANNUAL ST. STEPHEN SCHOOL GOLF CLASSIC

The Annual St. Stephen School Golf Classic will be at the River Valley Ranch Golf Course, Friday, September 25, 2020. Full of fun competition, this event draws players from all over the state. Over the past several years the classic has generated over one hundred thousand dollars in much needed school funding. This support is necessary for books, supplies, and overall supplementation of the rising cost of educating our exceptional students. With your help we can make this the best golf tournament yet. Please feel free to contact Steve Van Dyke (970-948-1848), with any questions or if you would like to join the golf committee and take care of those required service hours at the beginning of the school year. No golf experience necessary!!!! You will find registration forms on the website, on Facebook and at the front office. Additionally, any St. Stephen school family that sells a sponsorship will get not only kudos but also two hours of volunteer time.

ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER AND PARISH RAFFLE

This year's Spaghetti Dinner will be held on October 10th in the Parish Hall and possibly on the lawn between the Church and school. This long standing, community event has become a tradition for many. This is one of the many events where new friends are made and we get to reconnect with old friends as we break bread together and share our life stories. We ask that each school family sell or purchase ten tickets to this event. We are looking for a chairperson of this event; if you are interested, please call the school office at 945-7746. Also, the Annual Parish Raffle will take place at Spaghetti Dinner this year.

ANNUAL POINSETTIA SALE

Each year we take orders for poinsettias that we get locally. These poinsettias are big, healthy, and beautiful! They are perfect holiday decorations for any home or business. The order forms will be going home with your students in early November and the poinsettias will arrive sometime around Thanksgiving. Our chairperson for this event is Vanessa Burk.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK AND FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Catholic Schools Week is scheduled for January 30th – February 4th. We have a lot of fun activities for students and community members. This year, we plan to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of St. Stephen Catholic School offering quality, Catholic education in our valley since 1981! We plan to kick-off the week with a celebration of family and Catholic education at a Family Fun Night on Friday, January 29th! We will have fun activities planned for students throughout the week. We will cap off this week with our annual Winter Gala on Saturday (2/6)!

We need a chairperson to take on the planning of Catholic Schools Week. We do have samples from previous years to help to inspire and perhaps guide our new chairperson and their committee. Just to clarify, the Gala committee is separate from the Catholic Schools Week Committee. Please contact Mrs. Oliver if you would like to find out more about chairing this event 945-7746.

LENTEN FRIDAY FISH FRIES

Our Lenten Friday Fish Fries are truly a parish, school and greater community family event. This year our Fish Fridays are: 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/12 and 3/19. We need an army of volunteers to help with everything from getting food donations, cooking, setting up tables & chairs, serving food and clean up each night. Vanessa and Houston Burk are chairing this event. Please contact the school office if you are interested in helping with this event.

ST. STEPHEN SPRING GALA

The date set for this year's gala is February 6th! This is a wonderful evening filled with terrific food, music, dancing, an open bar and silent auction. Our chairperson for this event is Giovanna Kennedy. This event is held annually in the Parish Hall. We need a lot of help to make this event a success, this includes decorations, getting donations for silent auction items, setting up, kitchen help, serving food, and clean up. Please let the school office know if you are interested in volunteering for this event.

CLASSROOM HELP AND RECESS/LUNCH DUTY VOLUNTEERS/FIELD TRIPS

Due to COVID19 restrictions, we are working to limit germ exposure for our students, staff, and parents; thus, we are not allowing parents in our building. However, that does not mean that you cannot contact your child's teachers and other staff members via email to set up a meeting time via Zoom. We still love our families and we greatly value parents as their children's first teachers.

THE VIRTUS PROGRAM IS REPLACING THE CALLED TO PROTECT PROGRAM– SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING CLASS

VIRTUS Class will be offered at the school or via ZOOM (during COVID19) in both English and Spanish. Virtus training is required for all volunteers who work with our students. All school volunteers, staff and substitutes are required to take this class before they can volunteer at the school. Volunteers need to update/renew safe environment training every five years. While trying to implement this new program, we will start with those volunteers who have not taken our Called to Protect Program and then work our way through updating all our other volunteers' safe environment training, based on who needs to update first. We are also awaiting further direction from the Archdiocese on timeframes and deadlines. If you know that you need to update, please contact Mrs. Sandoval.

SSCS ASSOCIATION/COUNCIL/BOARD

ST. STEPHEN STUDENT COUNCIL

The general goals of this group are to foster leadership potential, to learn to work collaboratively and to include students in the school improvement process and plans. This group will work together to develop a student council mission statement, a vision statement, determine needs, set goals, and create an action plan to accomplish their goals. With the guidance of their faculty advisor, the student body will be electing their vice president, treasurer, and secretary. Congratulations to eighth grader, Sophia Lozano on becoming this year's Student Body President! Last year, Sophia served as our Student Council Vice President.

ST. STEPHEN PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (SSPTA)

All parents are invited and encouraged to become actively involved in this organization by attending the quarterly meetings. The SSPTA organization supports the school operation with general, good will, fundraising, celebration events (School Family Fun Nights, etc.) and general classroom support concepts including Room Parents. They also oversee the program of service hour requirements from parents by providing school community events which are opportunities to volunteer. You have further questions please contact Principal Glenda Oliver.

ST. STEPHEN SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)

The School Advisory Council is a group of parents who have been invited to serve on this board by the pastor or principal. This group meets monthly to regularly review and revise school policies and procedures. Parents who have suggestions about improving the policies and procedures of our school can request to present their ideas to the committee by contacting Principal Glenda Oliver.

ST. STEPHEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee has taken on planning renovations for the exterior school building, that we hope to start in the fall of 2020. The plan is to update the look of the building and attract more families to our school. Many thanks to the Capital Campaign Committee who successfully fundraised over **\$2.5 million**, completing and paying off the Parish Hall (a \$1million project). Thanks be to God that for our generous parish and school families who are willing to pay it forward.

Thank you for choosing to send your children to St. Stephen Catholic School, where we believe in educating the whole child mind, body and spirit.

Abundant Blessings,

Mrs. Oliver and The SSCS Team

They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles' wings; They will run and not grow weary, walk, and not grow faint.

-Isaiah 40:31