



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS Herald

SUPPLEMENT TO ARKANSAS CATHOLIC — NEWS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE DIOCESE OF LITTLE ROCK

AUGUST 16, 2014

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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

You have heard of STEM, but what about STREAM?

By Vernell Bowen
Superintendent of Schools

There has been a lot of conversation about education initiatives in the past few years that deal with improvement of curriculum: Common Core, STEM and now STREAM. What does all of this mean for our students?



Vernell Bowen

The Common Core initiative has been examined by the Office of Catholic Schools' curriculum committee for the past three years in the areas of language arts, math and science. Very few changes were made to the already existing Catholic school curriculum for grades K-8 and then, only changes that would enhance what the schools were already doing.

In 2011, Gov. Mike Beebe and his Workforce Cabinet announced a new pilot program — STEM works — focused on science, technology, engineering and math education in high schools and universities, to help the state's workforce meet the escalating demand for skilled employees in high-tech fields. There are several universities and public high schools that are implementing the STEM curriculum.

In December 2013, the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) began the STREAM initiative (science, technology, religion, engineering, arts and math). The philosophy of Catholic education is to educate the whole child. Therefore the arts and religion are just as important as science, technology, engineering and math. The Office of Catholic Schools is investigating this initiative to see how this will enhance learning for our students.

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Priority: Recruit more Hispanic families

Less than 10 percent of students are from Mexico or Central America

By Dwain Hebda
Associate Editor

Leoncio Ochoa's two daughters attend St. Edward School in Little Rock. As co-chair of the parish's Hispanic Outreach Ministry, the school couldn't ask for a better advocate.

"St. Edward, it's a beautiful place," he said. "I am happy to always recommend it to other people."

Ochoa's enthusiasm hasn't happened overnight. Friends told him he was a fool for paying tuition when public school was free. In fact, his girls started in public school; he still has the letter from the district office tagging his eldest as gifted.

"I didn't understand the difference before, I had bad information," he said. "I was working two jobs to save money and pay for things for my family. That is why we came to America, to work hard and earn money and make a better life."

But Ochoa's thinking turned a corner the day he witnessed a school security guard beat another adult to the ground with his bare hands. A kindergarten class stood watching nearby, but no principal ever appeared to break it up. From that moment on, he knew there



Dwain Hebda

Faith Ochoa (left) and her younger sister Kathy greet the dawning of a new academic year at St. Edward School in Little Rock. St. Edward School has one of the highest Hispanic enrollments in the Diocese of Little Rock.

had to be something better and he was convinced it was to be found in a Catholic classroom.

"I don't care about money now, it can be \$200 a month, \$300, \$1,000 a month I don't care," he said. "I care about my daughters. They are

the best investment there is."

The pressures Ochoa faced are common, but the outcome is not. Despite being heavily invested in Catholic parishes, only a fraction of Hispanics send their children to Catholic school. According to sta-

tistics provided by the diocesan Catholic Schools office, there were 628 Hispanic students among a total enrollment of 6,405 last year. Since the 2006-2007 term, the percentage

See **Recruit** page 10

Immunizations added to back-to-school to-do list

Requirements change to prevent meningitis and whooping cough

By Aprille Hanson
Little Rock Correspondent

For parents getting their children ready for the school year there's usually more than a few items on the list: Folders, backpacks, pens/pencils, clothes ... and this year, a new batch of immunizations.

"It's been several years since they've done that," said Maureen Berry, administrative assistant with Immaculate Conception School in North Little Rock, speaking of updated vaccine requirements.

In April, the Arkansas Depart-



Malea Hargett

ment of Health issued a proposed list of additional immunizations required for students attending public or private school. Arkansas law dictates that students must be immunized or in the process

(some shots include two or three doses) by Oct. 1 or a student could face expulsion.

Vernell Bowen, superintendent of Catholic schools, said she understands why some parents might be frustrated with the changes because the final require-

ments were not approved by the health department until July.

The additional immunizations that become mandatory Sept. 1 are:

- If your child will be age 11 on or before Sept. 1 they will need a "booster" shot of Tdap (If your child will be 11 after school starts, your child will need to receive the vaccine within 30 days of his or her birthday).

"Tdap protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (also known as whooping cough). In the case of the Tdap, the changes were made specifically to help reduce the number of pertussis cases," Kerry Krell, public information officer for the Office of Health Communications and Marketing in the Arkansas Department of Health, said.

In 2013, Arkansas had 466 cases

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Recruit

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of Catholic school students identified as Hispanic has nearly doubled, from 5.3 to 9.1 percent.

St. Theresa School in Little Rock and St. Edward School had the most Hispanic students (61 each) and highest percentage of the student body at 41 percent and 36 percent, respectively. Immaculate Conception School in Fort Smith was third with 59 Hispanic students comprising 29 percent of enrollment and boasts the largest increase in percent of enrollment since 2006, at just over 20 percent.

But, as those associated with these schools will attest, such increases aren't tracking alongside the rising number of Hispanic families in the pews. Were that the case, many parochial schools' enrollment would double or triple overnight. Most of them stay away for reasons of cost and prioritizing work ahead of education. Those facing documentation issues may feel more hidden in larger public schools, or, seeing fewer fellow Hispanics in the Catholic student body, feel the outsider all the more intently.

Still, there are schools incrementally increasing Hispanic enrollment and these have three things in common: They have adopted marketing and outreach tactics that carry weight in the Hispanic community, they address the issue of cost and consistently create an atmosphere that stresses inclusiveness.

RELATIONSHIPS RULE

Any Catholic school successfully attracting Hispanics does so one on one, ideally by employing a handful of respected influencers within the community. St. Edward's Hispanic Outreach Ministry, an eight-person group made up mostly of school parents, was formed last year for just this reason.

The group is in the process of forming a cadre of ambassadors

to promote the school at various Hispanic events in the community, but its members are already active promoters of the school.

"The problem is bad information," Ochoa said. "A lot of people in the Hispanic community, they say, 'I'm poor,' or they can't read or speak the language and so they don't think they are welcome. They are sometimes hard to talk to about it, but we have the right information and the right tools to talk to them now."

All of this is not to say that non-Hispanic people can't be an authoritative voice; Hispanics' deep reverence means they hold clergy in particularly high esteem, something

Father Mark Wood, St. Theresa Church pastor, leverages throughout the year. In addition to scheduling school families to address the congregation during Mass, he also doesn't miss an opportunity to plug the school when invited to various events, such as blessing the family home. It's not a process that works overnight.

"You have to understand your audience," Father Wood said. "Relationships are very important in the Hispanic community so things spread by word of mouth. People who send their children here typically know another family who is already here. That's how they have confidence they are making a good decision."

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COST

To understand the role paying tuition plays in the decision to attend Catholic school or not, schools must take into account that for many Hispanic immigrants, the very concept doesn't square with long-held cultural weighing of costs and benefits.

"A number of our Hispanic par-

ents don't have a high level of education themselves and so Catholic school isn't a priority worth investing in," said Susi Blanco, co-chair of St. Edward's Hispanic outreach. "They put 'public' and 'free' together and they aren't aware of the difference in the quality of education. That's why many students come to us only after something goes wrong in the public school."

Value messages are often a difficult sell. Back home, many im-

"In a lot of cases, they're sending their children to school to learn how not to be poor. Education is very utilitarian. ... We say, 'Come to Catholic school and we'll make you a better, more self-aware person,' to which your typical immigrant parent says, 'And then what?'"

Father Mauricio Carrasco, associate pastor of St. Theresa Church

migrants know Catholic education only as something for the rich, particularly in Mexico. U.S. Catholic schools are often dismissed out of hand, said Father Mauricio Carrasco, associate pastor of St. Theresa Church.

"To an immigrant's eyes, a classroom that has a computer and government resources is very, very good compared to what they're used to," he said. "Parents who are trying to provide next week's meal don't spend a lot of time thinking, 'I don't really like the academic pedagogy at the public school.' If their kids are safe, they have to be able to have a compelling reason to consider Catholic schools."

Hispanic parents also generally have a harder time paying for something that deals in the abstract. Father Carrasco, who immigrated to Arkansas from Mexico when he was 11, said in his own home, every educational decision was based on what financial benefit the move would bring.

"It's really hard for some of these families to think of education in the truest sense," he said. "In a

lot of cases, they're sending their children to school to learn how not to be poor. Education is very utilitarian. But to us in the Catholic schools, that's not the true meaning of education. We say, 'Come to Catholic school and we'll make you a better, more self-aware person,' to which your typical immigrant parent says, 'And then what?'"

Cultural dissonance aside, many immigrant families are in what Father Carrasco called, "survival first, education second," mode, thus facing the same economic realities as people of every other background within their income bracket. "The adults want their children to come here very badly; we'd have a school full if more of them could afford it," said Denise Troutman, principal of North Little Rock Catholic Academy.

To help meet this need, Troutman has crafted partnerships with students' home parishes to help subsidize students' education.

The largest ongoing effort is at North Little Rock's tiny St. Anne Church, at which the bulk of the school's Hispanic students are members. Last year, 20 students received assistance of about \$450 per child, money raised all or in part through parish fundraisers. St. Anne parents are also eager to complete odd jobs or volunteer other services at the academy to help keep costs down.

Troutman is tireless in this effort; she's been known to cold-call parishioners she knows to solicit individual sponsorships.

"I might not get a whole year's worth, but it might cover a semester," she said. "People don't always understand how much difference even a partial sponsorship can make."

A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Sharon Blentlinger of Immaculate Conception School in Fort Smith dug into Hispanic student recruitment six years ago the only way the non-Spanish-speaking principal knew how.

"The first thing I did was start going to Spanish Mass," she said.

Besides connecting with influencers, she leveraged the few Hispanic parents already attending the school as interpreters and addressed the wider congregation to further break down barriers. From there, bulletin inserts and open houses followed some of which, she is quick to note, bombed. But the effort didn't go unnoticed.

"It helped for the people to get to know her," said Liliana Infante, whose three children attended Immaculate Conception School. "She was always really warm and she let people know that she really wanted the kids to come to school there."

As little by little Blentlinger and parish leadership started to gain traction in the community, she made sure the people she was reaching would daily experience a welcoming environment. The centerpiece of this is a monthly meeting she started not only to keep Hispanic parents in the loop on homework and school events, but also to give them a forum to voice questions or suggestions.

Blentlinger followed the blueprint in launching homework labs as an extension of the school's after-care program. The labs, which are open to all students, play a vital role in helping immigrant children transition to American academics.

"It takes a personal and sincere commitment to want every culture to be included in a school," Blentlinger said. "It takes putting yourself out there to deliver the important message that we want you to be a part of our school and then backing it up every day. You have to make people understand that everybody is accountable in this."

STREAM

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Kathy Mears, past elementary president for NCEA, stated in a post on the NCEA website, "While many public schools have STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programs, STEM alone is not enough for Catholic schools. Catholic school leaders believe in educating the whole child. We believe that exposure to the arts is essential and we are committed to an educational experience that provides multiple encounters with Christ in every aspect of curriculum and instruction. STREAM will help us to achieve these goals.

"This initiative is ambitious. It requires teachers to be intentional in providing students with educational experiences that integrate many curricular areas. It can be project-based learning. It also



can be a mathematics class where students integrate the study of religion by learning about statistics related to poverty and the Church's response. STREAM also can be a science class that integrates art and the beauty of God's creation as children draw pictures or create sculptures that represent the environment provided by our creator."

In May 2014, Heather Gossart, a hands-on practitioner who has been a chief school administrator at the elementary and secondary levels, outlined 10 characteristics of a STREAM school on the NCEA website.

■ STREAM schools seek to in-

tegrate Catholic identity into every aspect of the curriculum.

■ STREAM schools provide a challenging learning environment focused on science, technology, math, arts and the integration of education in the faith.

■ STREAM schools promote a culture of innovation as well as a commitment to ethical behavior.

■ STREAM schools seek to increase the participation of groups that are under-represented in the sciences.

■ STREAM schools increase content literacy for all students including those who do not pursue technology-related careers or

additional studies in the STREAM disciplines.

■ STREAM schools are inclusive.

■ STREAM schools foster an environment that encourages problem solving, group collaboration and independent research.

■ STREAM schools demonstrate that success is defined in many ways and can occur in many different types of schools and learning environments.

■ STREAM schools use strategic planning as a blueprint to guide the school's development and implementation of the STREAM curriculum.

■ STREAM schools are "think

forward" institutions and place high priority on educator training, learning, leadership and 21st century skill applications.

During this school year the Office of Catholic Schools will be presenting the concepts of STREAM through workshops to principals and teachers. Many of our schools are already integrating some of the 10 characteristics, but as educators we are always searching for the best ways to prepare our students for the future of the Church and society. We can always improve and learn more effective techniques for reaching our students.

As an educator for more than 40 years, I have seen the pendulum swing far to the left and then far to the right in teaching methods and curriculum initiatives. I feel STREAM will be an initiative that will help develop students to become better problem solvers for tomorrow's society and workforce.

Summer program

"Mission Investigation" at St. Theresa School in Little Rock was successful. Each week was inspired by a Bible story. The children were able to carry this inspiration forward into creative and cooperative learning. The older children showed their leadership skills, while the younger children enjoyed the guidance of the "big kids" throughout each day. The students also had fun and educational field trips each week. Teachers Susan Roberson, Ami Moritz, Ashley Gammill and Sara Jones led the children.

Mr. Post Day

St. John School in Hot Springs celebrated Mr. Post Day May 16 in honor of the retirement of Julian Post, who had served as playground supervisor for 17 years. Post, a St. John School graduate, and his wife Kay (who taught at St. John for many years) have been active members of St. John Parish and supporters of St. John School for many years.

The school was happy they honored Post, especially after they learned that he died July 30. The St. John School playground will be named in his honor.

Golf fundraiser

The sixth annual Knights of Columbus Charity Golf Tournament will be held at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 23 to support St. John School in Hot Springs. It will be held at the Magellan Golf Course in Hot Springs Village. One flight will include eighth women's teams.

The entry fee is \$85 per person. For more information, call the school at (501) 624-3171.

World competition

Mount St. Mary Academy students soared to the top once again at the Odyssey of the Mind world



During the "Mission Investigation" summer program at St. Theresa School in Little Rock, students visit a Little Rock fire station. All programs were inspired by Bible stories and included creative and cooperative learning.

competition, placing fifth overall.

Odyssey of the Mind is a problem-solving competition designed for kindergarten through college-age students. Unlike Quiz Bowl or other like competitions, OM has a creative interpretation element and an interpretive solution to a multi-stage long-term problem.

More than 836 teams from more than 25 countries competed at the World Finals at Iowa State University May 28-31. The students had the opportunity to see how teams from around the world interpreted

the same problem they tackled.

Recent graduates Bayley Elenzweig, Rachel Lorschach and Abbey Richardson competed with seniors Emily Dickson, Andrea Roberts, Jude Waggoner and junior Wendy Darr. They developed a storyline around puppets according to the problem's guidelines. They met every Sunday since August 2013 to develop their solution, which involved costume creation, a skit and incorporation of elements included in the very intricate and specific guidelines, which also included an eight-minute time limit. One of this year's solutions included a peoplet character costume that telescoped out to create movement of four puppet bodies.

MSM has participated in OM since 1996, when it was started by Dr. Deborah Baldwin, dean of the UALR College of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. She serves as coach and has recruited past OM team members to help as well.

The MSM teams routinely place first or second in regional and state competitions and progress regularly to the world competition. Traveling to universities from Colorado to Maryland and competing against impressive teams, MSM teams won the style category in 2006 and the spontaneous category in 2000 and received a Ranatra Fusca award for creativity in 2012.

This is the first year the team has placed in the top 10 overall at the world competition.

Summer cleaning

For the 18th year in a row par-

ents, students, faculty and staff members came together Aug. 2 to give Immaculate Conception School and grounds in Fort Smith a final sprucing up before the new school year. Classrooms and hallways were cleaned from top to bottom along with the auditorium, cafeteria and other common areas. The playground and surrounding areas were also swept and tidied up.

WiFi

Immaculate Conception School in Fort Smith is now a wireless campus and has 30 iPads and 30 Chromebooks for teachers and students to use. These tools will be shared among all grade levels and teachers to enhance the students' learning and discovery. The school received a grant from the Western Arkansas Planning and Development District General Improvement Funds Program to make the purchases and improvements.

New book

Father John Antony, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Fort Smith and former pastor of St. Joseph Church in Fayetteville, will release a new book called "Oh, For the Love of God," in late September. Profits will support the Fort Smith and Fayetteville schools. The book is a collection of his most popular homilies.

A book signing will be open to the public at 6 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Church Sept. 21 and at 6 p.m. at St. Joseph Church Sept. 27. The book can be bought on Amazon and Barnes and Noble websites.

New principals leading in Fort Smith, Little Rock

FORT SMITH
Christ the King

Ann Cannon

Hometown: Fort Smith

Education: Bachelor's degree in elementary education, University of Mississippi; master's degree in educational leadership, Arkansas Tech University



Educational experience:

Elementary teacher, St. Thomas Aquinas, Philadelphia, First United Methodist Weekday School, Fort Smith, and Immaculate Conception School, Fort Smith; assistant principal, Immaculate Conception School, Fort Smith

Cannon

Benefits of Catholic education:

Catholic education is rooted in the Gospel values of respect for life, love, solidarity, truth and justice. We develop a culture of high expectations, respect, trust, tolerance and love for all God created. Catholic schools provide a loving, devoted environment where the entire community of parents, students, teachers and parish is committed to the spiritual, academic and personal fulfillment of each child.

LITTLE ROCK
St. Edward

LaTonya Rayford White

Hometown: Holly Springs, Miss.

Education: Bachelor's degree in early childhood education, Rust College, Holly Springs, Miss.; master's degree in educational leadership, Trevecca Nazarene University, Nashville



White

Educational

experience: sixth grade teacher, St. Paul School, Memphis, Tenn.; middle school teacher and dean of students, Bishop Byrne Middle and High School, Memphis, Tenn.; principal, St. Augustine School, Memphis, Tenn.

Benefits of Catholic education:

Catholic education is the apex of the new evangelization. It teaches students to be self-disciplined disciples of Christ through academic excellence, service, faith and knowledge with the desire and belief to make a difference in the world.

TORNADO RELIEF



St. John students in Hot Springs raised \$600 May 9 to help a family who lost their home in the recent tornado. The Patton family from Mayflower is related to the Rob Shamburger family whose children attended St. John School several years ago. Presenting the check to Rob Shamburger (right) are Dayton Myers, fifth grade (from left); Christian Smith, fifth grade; Josie Carson, eighth grade; Kiley Brown, fifth grade; Ania Dominique, fifth grade; and Jasmin Gonsales, seventh grade.

Booster

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of whooping cough, up from 80 cases reported in 2011.

"Pertussis is very contagious, easily spread and causes uncontrollable, violent coughing fits, making it hard to breathe," Krell said. "Pertussis can be fatal, especially in babies. Most of Arkansas' cases are seen in babies younger than 1 and children between the ages of 10 and 11."

Previously this booster wasn't required until seventh grade.

■ If your child will be entering seventh grade, they need one dose of Meningococcal vaccine.

■ If your child is 16 years old, they need two doses of Meingococcal vaccine. If the first dose was received on or after age 16, only one dose is required.

"Meningococcal protects against meningitis, which is a serious bacterial infection that causes brain swelling and can be fatal," Krell said.

Previously the Meingococcal vaccine wasn't required until a student was 18 years old.

Dr. Jennifer Dillaha, medical director for immunizations at the Arkansas Department of Health, said there is no "grace period for this year," regarding the deadline for the vaccines.

Dillaha added that the vaccines aren't new, but rather a new requirement and that most students who get their shots according to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations should already have been given the vaccines.

"These changes were made to better protect students — and the rest of the community — from diseases that frequently cause serious illness that can lead to absenteeism, missed work, doctor's visits, hospitalizations and in some cases, death," Krell said.

Dillaha said parents will receive a one-page information sheet on each of the vaccines when they take their child to their general practitioner or the county health department. It is also available online at cdc.gov/vaccines.

"Side effects vary with different shots," Dillaha said. "The most common side effects with these vaccines are pain where the shot was given, and there may also be some redness and swelling."

Nurses within the Catholic schools informed parents of the updated vaccines in April and during the summer months through letters and e-mails. Typically, parents will bring the updated immunization records on "back to school" nights held in August.

Kristie Fox, a registered nurse at Christ the King School in Little Rock who has seven children of her own, said getting the students up-to-date on their vaccines as soon as possible should be a priority for parents.

"At my pediatrician's, they were

overwhelmed," Fox said. "I imagine the health department is swamped too."

Charity Luyet, a nurse at St. Joseph School in Conway, said some clinics are booked for two to three months in advance for vaccines, so waiting any longer is not a good option.

"All these changes can be so confusing and overwhelming to parents so my advice is check with your physician [because] they too have all the information on the changes," Luyet said.

But the vaccines, Luyet said, are necessary. In the five years since she's been at the school, she said whooping cough has been on the rise.

"We have had positive cases the past two years. Both years we immediately got the students who tested positive treated and all those who were exposed," Luyet said. "We also sent e-mails out to our parents making them aware of the outbreak and educating them on the symptoms ... Most of the time we were treating the entire class of students due to the close contact of all the students."

Fox said she, sometimes with the help of other staff members at Christ the King, can go over all the immunization records in a week and notify parents immediately if their child is not up-to-date. Only a small handful of the approximately 700 students at Christ the King are exempt from certain vaccines because of allergic reactions or chronic illnesses, which Fox added are "valid reasons."

"I don't agree that immunizations cause autism or anything like that," Fox said regarding the recent debate that immunizations can cause other illnesses in children. "They outweigh any risk ... if it prevents your child from getting sick."

Laura Fawcett, a licensed practical nurse at Subiaco Academy, said at the beginning of August 80 percent of the 32 football play-



KOMU News / flickr.com

Looking away from the action, Isabel Garcia, 8, didn't even wince when she got a vaccination in Columbia, Mo., in 2009. The state of Arkansas now requires additional immunizations for children of certain ages in all public or private schools.

ers (the only ones at that point to turn in updated shot records) were compliant with the updated immunizations.

"I know Sebastian County had run out and they had to wait until they could replenish their stock," Fawcett said. "Over the summer, most of the county health departments were extending their hours," to help with the overflow of students who need vaccines.

Fawcett said the additional requirements will help keep students safe.

"Meningitis can be such a deadly disease and when you have a boarding school," with students in close quarters, it can heighten the risk, Fawcett said. "I think they are justifiable."

Though the department encourages all children to be vaccinated, parents can e-mail the ADH Immunization Section at Immunization.Section@arkansas.gov to request the exemption form for a medical, religious or philosophical

exemption, according to the health department.

"I've seen it, meningitis, and what it does to a child," Fawcett said. "It's worth it to get the shot."

At St. Joseph in Conway, Luyet said of the 433 students at the three campuses, more than half are up-to-date on the new immunization requirements.

"It really has not been that difficult to handle the influx of the new immunizations. I started sending emails to all my parents in the spring with the changes and which grades the changes would effect," Luyet said. "Our local pediatric clinics also were very helpful with our students who were patients at their clinics and helped reinforce the changes."

Dillaha said the shots are free, covered by insurance. Those without insurance also have a few options.

"Childhood immunizations are provided at no cost to families. The Affordable Care Act requires private insurance plans to cover all ACIP-recommended vaccinations at no cost to patients," Dillaha said.

"Children on Medicaid ARKids and children without private insurance can receive immunizations through the Vaccine for Children program at no cost to their family. However, parents are reminded to always bring their insurance or Medicaid card with them to their children's immunization appointments."

The bottom line, Luyet said, is keeping the children healthy, which is the goal of the updated vaccine requirements.

"My opinion of the immunization changes is if it helps keep diseases out of our schools, such as whooping cough, it's worth all the extra work," Luyet said. "We need to do all that we can to keep our students healthy and from spreading unnecessary germs that could have been prevented."

CALENDAR 2014-2015

- **Aug. 13:** First day of school (Little Rock/North Little Rock schools)*
- **Aug. 18:** First day of school
- **Sept. 1:** Labor Day (schools closed)
- **Sept. 26:** Arkansas Catholic Professional Day for Teachers (schools closed)
- **Nov. 26-28:** Thanksgiving Holiday (schools closed)
- **Dec. 22-Jan. 2:** Christmas Break (schools closed)
- **Jan. 19:** Dr. Martin L. King Jr. Day (schools closed)
- **Jan. 25-31:** National Catholic Schools Week
- **Feb. 16:** Presidents Day (schools closed)
- **March 23-27:** Spring Break (schools closed)
- **April 3:** Good Friday (schools closed)
- **April 6-10:** Stanford testing (Little Rock/North Little Rock schools)
- **April 6-24:** Stanford testing
- **May 25:** Memorial Day (schools closed)
- **May 28:** Last day of school (report card day) (Little Rock/North Little Rock schools)*
- **June 2:** Last day of school (report card day)

*Schools starting Aug. 13 close their school year May 28. Note: Eighth graders may not get out of school any earlier than May 13.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Little Rock will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, handicap or national origin in administration of their educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic or other school administered programs.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs.

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHES

Some of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Little Rock participate in the Federal Nutrition Program for Schools. The chart below shows the income qualifications for this program. You should check with your child's school to see if they participate. If your income qualifies according to this chart, you may request an application from the school.

USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM INCOME GUIDELINES July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Household Size	FREE					REDUCED PRICE				
	Annual	Monthly	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly	Annual	Monthly	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	15,171	1,265	633	584	292	21,590	1,800	900	831	416
2	20,449	1,705	853	787	394	29,101	2,426	1,213	1,120	560
3	25,727	2,144	1,072	990	495	36,612	3,051	1,526	1,409	705
4	31,005	2,584	1,292	1,193	597	44,123	3,677	1,839	1,698	849
5	36,283	3,024	1,512	1,396	698	51,634	4,303	2,152	1,986	993
6	41,561	3,464	1,732	1,599	800	59,145	4,929	2,465	2,275	1,138
7	46,839	3,904	1,952	1,802	901	66,656	5,555	2,778	2,564	1,282
8	52,117	4,344	2,172	2,005	1,003	74,167	6,181	3,091	2,853	1,427
Each additional household member add	+5,278	+440	+220	+203	+102	+7,511	+626	+313	+289	+145