

# IC CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MINNSAA SCHOOLS OF DISTINCTION 08



## Back to School 2010

### Special points of interest:

- We will begin the school year on Tuesday, Sept. 7th. Students will be greeted outside at 7:40 a.m.
- The Open House at IC will be held on Thursday Sept. 9th at 6:30 p.m. This will begin in the church. The students and families will then visit their classrooms. Please join us.
- School begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 2:40 p.m. (take note, this 2:40 dismissal time is new this year). Morning supervision begins at 7:30 a.m. and after school supervision ends at 3:05 daily.
- Bussing will be available the first week of school.

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## From the Desk of the IC Principal, Matthew Bauman

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Dear IC Parents,

It is with great anticipation that I welcome you to the 2010-2011 school year!

As the school year approaches I am thankful. I am thankful for the wonderful, professional and Christ-centered staff here at IC. They are committed to providing an outstanding educational experience rooted in and founded on Christ. They truly love Catholic education and understand God's call to serve in this unique

ministry.

I am thankful for you, our students and our families. Thank you for making the commitment to a Catholic education and for entrusting your children to our teachers and staff. As you know, they are fully committed to helping your child reach their greatest spiritual and academic potential.

I am well aware of how precious summertime is, so please continue to enjoy the beautiful weather that God has blessed us with. I

look forward to seeing all of the wonderful IC families again this fall and can't wait to start meet those of you that I don't know yet. If you have questions as we prepare for the school year, feel free to call (947-1252) or e-mail [mbauman@gtacs.org](mailto:mbauman@gtacs.org).

I will continue to pray for your children during these waning days of summer break.

In Christ,  
Mr. Matthew Bauman

### Schedule Changes:

In line with our mission statement – "to develop each child to his or her fullest academic potential" – Immaculate Conception Elementary is constantly looking for ways to improve. One area that we have been focusing on recently is our daily schedule. We want to provide our teachers and students with a schedule that allows all students to grow and learn, that maximizes instructional time, and one that provides students with a variety of learning experiences. With all that said, we also know that much time must be devoted to Mathematics, Language Arts, and Religion as those subjects lay the groundwork for everything else we do inside and outside of our school. In order for us to arrive at these goals, we are making some changes to our schedule—specifically to the scheduling of our 'specials' at Immaculate Conception Elementary.

**Music:** Students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade will attend music class once a week for a thirty minute period. This will give all students the opportunity to experience and take part in a music class. 5th graders will have the opportunity to join band (see page 3 for more info). For those students who have a greater interest in music, we will have an after school choir program that meets once a week for any interested 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup> grade student. This choir group will sing at our weekly school Masses, take part in the spring Festival of the Arts, and also help lead praise music within our school when needed.

**Computers:** We will be offering our computer classes as a before or after school elective for students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The class itself will be very much focused on keyboarding—a skill and class that has been lost a bit, but is essential in today's world. "Research shows that children with keying skills are able to compose faster, are prouder of their work, produce documents with neater appearance, have better motivation, and demonstrate improved language skills" (Nieman, 1996).

Research recommends that keyboarding be taught somewhere around 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This is a time when their fingers and hands are developed enough to learn this important skill. According to an article titled, *Who Should Teach Keyboarding and When Should It Be Taught*, "Keyboarding is a psychomotor skill and resembles playing a musical instrument such as the piano; the fine motor muscles must respond to the brain's instructions." This argument is further strengthened by the following statement: "Children in grades four to six gradually exhibit greater smoothness and command of small-muscle expression, which is reflected in better coordination in activities (Prigge and Braathen, 1993). When school starts in the fall we will provide an opportunity for you to sign your student up for the keyboarding class.

**Spanish:** All students will have the opportunity to participate in an exciting foreign language program later this fall. As the needs of our students are changing, we want to provide a program that caters to their individual skill capabilities and challenges them appropriately. All students will have the opportunity by using "Rosetta Stone for the Classroom." They will have access to lessons here at school (1 day per week for 30 minutes) and at home (minimum of 30 minutes). More information will be given in future newsletters with the details of the program and date it will begin.

**Dates To Remember:**

**8/15/10:** Bussing Information available in the Record Eagle

**8/23/10: School Offices Open**

**8/27/10:** School Supply Lists Posted at IC (they are also available on our website).

**9/1/10:** Class lists posted at IC by 8:00 a.m.

**9/3/10:** School offices closed

**9/7/10:** First Day of School (1/2 Day)

**9/9/10:** PTC Parent Coffee 7:40-8:45 a.m. in the IC Cafeteria

**9/9/10:** IC Open House and Ice Cream Social 6:30 p.m. starting in the Church.

**9/10/10:** All System Mass at Saint Francis H.S. at 8:30 a.m. (Please drop your child off starting at 7:30 a.m. We will gather in Kohler Auditorium).

Be sure to check out the Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures for Immaculate Conception on our website:

[http://gtacs.org/ic\\_dropoff.php](http://gtacs.org/ic_dropoff.php)

This is especially important if this is your first child to attend IC.

### 3rd Grade Information

Our 3rd grade team of teachers are as follows:

- Mrs. Janine Winkler (Room 101)
- Mrs. Heidi Stoudt (Room 102)
- Mrs. Patsy Keipper (Room 103)

We are anxious to welcome our 3rd graders to their new school.

These students receive great support as they become more independent learners and read across the different curriculum areas. There is a saying that is used at GTACS: "At Holy Angels, we teach our students to read, so that when they come to IC they can read to learn." Students enjoy the extra challenges from not only

their math and language arts areas, but their science and social studies, as well. Religion is taught throughout the day with prayer and faith woven into all aspects of the curriculum.



### 4th Grade Information

Our 4th grade team of teachers are as follows:

- Mrs. Kelly Daciuk and Mrs. Kim Meachum (Room 104)
- Ms. Mary Conroy (Room 210)
- Miss Jan Cleland (Room 209)
- Mrs. Lea Ann Anderson (Room 211)

Fourth grade is an exciting year as the social studies curriculum focuses around Michigan history. Students will be learning interesting facts about this great state that we live in and take part in some great field trips.

This is also the grade where students have a hard cover

math book and start copying their problems out of a textbook for homework instead of using a worksheet.

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

### 5th Grade Information

Our 5th grade team of teachers are as follows:

- Mrs. Jeana Paquet (Room 208)
- Mrs. Colleen Peters (Room 201)
- Mrs. Megan Glynn (Room 202)
- Mr. Ben Beckwith (Room 203)

Our 5th grade students embark on a new year as being the leaders of our school.

This theme will be constantly reinforced, as their peers in the lower grades look up to them. These students also can experience leadership by becoming involved in our "K Kids Club", which is a form of student council, sponsored by

the Kiwanis Club. At this grade level, we also begin switching classes for math only. This enables students to get a taste of middle school when they will switch for all subject areas.

Christian service will also be reinforced with a trip to Grand Rapids to help at the Gleaners Food Pantry.

## Additional Faculty Members and Classes

- Mrs. Julie Forlenza—P.E. (All grades attend P.E. class twice a week for 30 minutes).
- Mrs. Donna Brakel—Art (All grades attend once a week for 45 minutes).
- Mrs. Margaret Wilson—Library (All grades attend library once a week for 30 minutes).
- Spanish—Rosetta Stone (All grades attend once a week for 30 minutes).
- Mr. Todd Vipond—Music (3rd & 4th grades attend once a week for 30 minutes).
- Mrs. Cress Smith—Band (5th grade students attend twice a week for 45 minutes).
- Mrs. Carol Johnson—Computers (This is an elective opportunity for 4th and 5th grade students).
- Ms. Jennifer Newman—St. Bridget Club (designed for students who may need extra academic support in reading).
- Mrs. Kathleen Allard—St. Thomas Aquinas Math (designed for students who need additional academic challenges in Math).
- Mrs. Laura Seward—St. Thomas Aquinas Language Arts (designed for students who need additional academic challenges in Language Arts).
- Ms. Susan Stendel—School Counselor (She provides different classroom lessons, as well as works individually with students and families).

## 5th Grade Band Information

Our 5th grade students have the opportunity to play in our band. Our band director, Mrs. Cress Smith, will meet with students twice a week during the school day. Mrs. Smith is our band director for grades 5-12th. There will be a parent meeting for all interested 5th grade students and families scheduled in mid to late September—please keep an eye out for that date in a future IC Connection. Students will be fitted for musical instruments at that time and rental plans will be discussed. This is a great way to introduce students to an instrument. Our 5th grade band will perform at various concerts throughout the year. Band students will need to wear black pants or skirts and white shirts for their concerts. Mrs. Smith will have more information available at

the parent meeting.

Mrs. Smith is also assisted by Mr. Michael Nunn, Dr. Deborah Podolka, and Mr. Mike Hunter.

Students choosing not to enroll in band, will be provided a general music option. However, we ask that all students enroll in band to start the school year and try it for at least a semester.

## Extracurricular Activities

Students at IC have the option of participating in organized sports through the school. Students who participate must keep in mind that they are representing not only themselves, but their school, their community, their church, their parents and their team.

We have also been blessed with outstanding parent volunteers to coach our Odyssey of the Mind teams, as well as Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts. All of our students are invited to participate in the IC Praise Choir, which meets after school with new GTACS Choral Director, Ms. Amy Colligan. These students sing at weekly Mass, as well as sing in the community at different times of the year. Watch for our weekly newsletter called the IC Connection to learn more about extracurricular opportunities for your children!

A letter will also be sent home from our 4th-8th grade Athletic Director, Mrs. Julie Forlenza, detailing sports information in the near future.

### Point of interest:

School handbooks will be sent home the first week of school. It is important that you read the handbook and return the acknowledgment form in the back of the handbook.

### LUNCH PROGRAM:

Lunch is \$3.00 this year at Immaculate Conception. A reminder that lunch is not included in your student's tuition at Immaculate Conception. Parents may begin funding their children's lunch accounts at anytime. Checks (to GTACS) can be mailed to Karen Spencer, Dining Services: 123 E. 11th Street, TC, MI 49684. We are also blessed with a great lunch program.

*Our weekly Mass will be on **Wednesdays** (same as last year) at 8:15 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Parish. The school will also meet every other week for a school prayer service.*

*“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead.” JAMES 2:26*

## First Day of School

The first day of school will be on Tuesday, September 7th; this is a half day, which means that the students will be dismissed at 11:00 a.m. (TCAPS does provide busing both to and from school on our first day). Teachers will be on the playground at 7:40 a.m. to greet their new students on Tuesday.

### School Uniforms:

We’ve made school uniform guidelines available through a link you will find in your e-mail. Be sure to check it out.

## Supply Lists and Class Lists:

School supply lists will be posted on the doors of IC starting Monday August 27th (they are also available as links in this email and on our website). Class lists will be posted on the front doors on Wednesday, September 1st by 8:00 a.m.

**Grading Scale:** At Saint Francis High School, the administration and an Academic Leadership Team, which was comprised of the department heads, made a recommendation to transition to a 10 point grading scale from their current 7 point grading scale. At the May 2010 school board meeting that recommendation was voted upon and approved.

### **Below are the reasons for the change:**

- The majority of colleges and university admission counselors stated that the 7 point scale does not give our students an advantage. It is noted by some schools that our standard of grading is more rigorous, but it is not factored in systematically.
- The rigor of the school is judged by the quality of the curriculum, standardized test scores, and the students’ performance once at the college or university. The grading scale is one piece of information but not the most important.
- 10 point scales are not looked down upon by colleges and universities.
- Of the top ten Catholic Schools in the state, as ranked by Michigan Merit Exam results, we are the only school without a 10 point scale.
- The overwhelming majority of high schools use a 10 point scale. All area high schools are on a 10 point scale.
- Most colleges and universities use a 10 point scale.
- The 7 point system may be hampering our local and merit based scholarships as there is no consideration for different scales.

## After School Child Care Program

We will continue to offer our after school, but will start on Wednesday September 8th. They will be here on Tuesday September 7th to register students. Registration packets are also available in the Business Office or in our IC office. The program runs daily from 2:40 p.m.—6:00 p.m. downstairs in the school social hall.

We will continue to offer our after school child care program at Immaculate Conception, which is coordinated by Munson Childcare Services. Parents who are intending to use this program need to register their children by contacting Brigid Wilson at 935-7990 (bwilson@mhc.net). Child care will NOT be available on the first day

## All System Mass

There will be an All System Mass on Friday, September 10th at 8:30 a.m. in the St. Francis Gym. This is a wonderful time to gather all of our K-12 students together to celebrate God’s word and receive the Eucharist. All are invited and encouraged to attend this Mass. Students should be dropped off at the St. Francis/Holy Angels site that morning and report to the Kohler Auditorium until Mass begins. Their teachers will be there waiting for them.

## **Bussing Information:**

Bussing information will be available in a special insert in the Record Eagle on Sunday August 15th. You can also access the information at [www.TCAPS.org](http://www.TCAPS.org). If you indicated TCAPS Bussing on your GTACS registration form, you will receive a postcard in the mail (8/16-8/22) indicating the Bus Stop and estimated time for your child. If your child is riding the bus to or from school, please attach a tag or label to his/her backpack with the shuttle and route numbers. Any questions regarding bus routes should be referred to the TCAPS Bus Route Information “Hotline” at 933-1956. We will also continue to provide the shuttle busses from our site to SEAS for the 6th—8th graders. It leaves each morning from our parking lot by 7:25 a.m. and drops off at the end of the day by 3:05.