

Platooning. Looping.
What’s happening in 5th and 6th grades next year?



Team teaching is not new at Saint Joseph Catholic School. Each homeroom teacher in a grade level assumes responsibility for instruction of particular subjects. Next year, however, the platooning model or departmentalization will be fully embraced in fifth and sixth grades. A team of five instructors—each specializing in a different subject area—will work with students in the upper grades to prepare them for the move to middle school. The new departmental structure will be complemented by a looping model, where students have the same teacher in a subject area for two years.

While Saint Joseph’s students are well prepared academically when they move to middle school, one of the things Principal Donovan Yarnall heard frequently was that they wished they had had more experiencing negotiating the demands of different teachers. The platooning model is designed to provide students with this broader range of experience while allowing teachers to become specialists in particular subject areas.

Returning faculty—Mike Harmon (English Language Arts), Vicki McNally (Religion), and Phyllis Brandis (Social Studies)—will be joined by two new faculty members. Chris Bailey, a member of Saint Joseph’s parish, father of two current Saint Joseph’s students, and a National Board certified teacher in Science for Early Adolescents, will lead science instruction for both grades. Jude Barrineau, a 36-year veteran of middle grades instruction, will join the staff as the pre-algebra teacher. Each member of the team will also teach one math block.

Vicki McNally believes the new schedule will benefit students: “Studies show that achievement increases with this ‘Platooning Schedule.’” The learning experience is enhanced by being “allowed to move around and not just sit in one classroom environment all day,” she said.

Phyllis Brandis looks forward to next year’s departmental structure because it will allow her to invest “more time in the subjects at hand and give those subjects and the children my very best.”

Commenting on the looping structure, Mike Harmon noted, “Teachers will be able to make stronger connections with students since there will be a two-year period and can teach lessons that will build upon each other from year-to-year, diving deeper into various subject areas.”

The new departmental model for upper grades at Saint Joseph’s will be a winning scenario for students and teachers alike.



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Making the “Ah ha!” Happen

Scientific research shows growing evidence that learning is about making connections. Want to see how it works? Visit Saint Joseph’s second grade class. Gone are the days when teachers just stand in the front of the class, have students read from their books, and expect them to learn. When you enter Mrs. Anderson’s and Mrs. McLeod’s rooms, you can watch the “**ah ha**” happen as students make the connection between what they learn in the classroom and real-life experiences—all through an innovative teaching technique that Anderson and McLeod call “purposeful planning.”

The concept of purposeful planning is to creatively pair the Diocese’s curricula with hands-on experiences both inside and outside the classroom that help the children not only understand their lessons, but remember them.

“Collaboration is the key,” Mrs. Anderson says. “It’s about making a personal, positive connection and creating an experience with each lesson,” says McLeod. “When we learned about sentence construction, Mary King from WIS TV visited and talked about the importance of learning the basics of writing and how they are critical for the students’ future success in the workforce. When we learned

about Native Americans, we took a field trip to the Catawba Indian Nation Reservation where the children saw first-hand what they read about in their books. Those connections are what make learning fun and long-lasting.”

Both teachers agree that second grade is a critical year for spiritual formation and academic growth. Their inclusive programming creates an environment where they work hard to foster the concept of a healthy, whole child who will hopefully grow into an adult who is a life-long learner.

Anderson and McLeod fill the year with hands-on experiences for their students. But how do these teachers afford visits to the Challenger Learning Center, trips to the SC Aquarium in Charleston, performances at the Koger Center, and much more? Careful research, good planning, generous families, grants, and connections in the community. “It’s all about making those connections!” laugh both Anderson and McLeod. Just another example of how these two teachers who have taught together for so long they not only finish each other’s sentences but also create a seamless and fun learning environment for second graders.

2016 Saints Fund Update

The Saint Joseph School Development Committee wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who helped make Midlands Gives Day 2016 a huge success. We are especially grateful to our “Matching Gift Angels” for their tremendous generosity! As you know, Midlands Gives is a once-a-year online giving event designed to benefit a wide variety of Midlands-area nonprofits. On May 3rd, Saint Joseph School participated in this event for the first time ever, with proceeds benefitting the school’s Saints Fund. Out of 382 participating nonprofits, Saint Joseph ranked 25th in number of donations and 20th in the total dollar amount collected.

Through your generosity we raised nearly \$12,000 in one day, bringing our Saints Fund total to just over \$45,000 – 75% of our goal for the year.

The Saints Fund is the school’s single most important fundraising activity of the year. Whether we are parents, grandparents, alumni, or parishioners, we all come together to support the Saints Fund and the continued excellence of Saint Joseph Catholic School. If you have yet to give, please go to stjosdevine.com. No amount is too small, every dollar counts!



Giving is Easy
Visit www.stjosdevine.com and click on “Support Us” or submit your pledge card today.

Inspiring Minds. Building Character. Living Faith.

Upcoming Events

AUGUST 15

NEW FAMILY
ORIENTATION AND
ICE CREAM SOCIAL

AUGUST 17

FIRST DAY
OF SCHOOL

AUGUST 22

BACK TO
SCHOOL NIGHT

Thank You For An Outstanding Year!

I hope this letter finds you doing well and enjoying your summer. I am very excited to have completed my second year at Saint Joseph, a community guided by faith and committed to excellence. I remain dedicated to continuing the strong tradition of providing top-notch academics in an environment that promotes and instills the values and teachings of the Catholic Church.

I would like to thank many people who have contributed to making this year a success: my administrative team of Katie Rogers, Nancy Sexton, Rebecca Seezen, Lisa Militello, Lisa Leonard and Courtney Thompson – an outstanding faculty and staff who are the backbone of the school; Msgr. Harris, Fr. Wilson and the Parish staff; and the School Advisory Council, which was led this year by Lisa Dayhuff. A special thank you to Lisa who has served on Advisory Council for six years and in just about every volunteer position within the school's PTO for the past 13 years. Without her vision and dedication, the school would not be the expanding, vibrant, prosperous community it is today. Lisa, we will miss you! The PTO continues to be a blessing to our school, providing financial support for curriculum enhancements and building community within our school family. Thank you to Becky Thoder and members of the PTO for your service this year. I would also like to thank the parents for your continued support of Saint Joseph School and Parish. Last, but not least, I want to thank the students whose bright smiles and enthusiasm make coming to school every day a joy!

Congratulations to our sixth grade graduates and their families. We wish you the best of luck as you move on to middle school! We appreciate the contributions you have made to Saint Joseph School throughout the years and want you to remember that you will always be part of the Saint Joseph family.

We look forward to the 2016-2017 school year. Our spiritual theme will be "By our works we show our faith" (James 2:16-18). These words from the letter of James reminded the early Christian community that it was through their works and actions that their faith was best lived.

As we work to develop the next generation of leaders, Saint Joseph Catholic School continues to explore new ways to provide high-quality instruction that grows the whole child. The staff and I are excited to plan for curriculum enhancements using our new mobile computer lab for the 2016-2017 school year and for enhancements in the fifth and sixth grade instructional schedule, which is described in greater detail in this newsletter. Wonderful things are happening at Saint Joseph Catholic School!

Sincerely,



Donavan Yarnall, Ed.S.
Principal



O How Great and Good God Is

Thank you to Sister Maria for 45 years of prayerful teaching and endless love and support. She has touched the lives of so many, and, for that, we are grateful. We ask God to bless her in her retirement as she has blessed us at Saint Joseph.



Tooting Their Own Horns

Does your son turn his fork and spoon into drumsticks? Does your daughter use a paper towel roll as a horn? Then maybe it's time to think about having them try out for the Saint Joseph band. The band program, led by Erika VanDriel, focuses on learning the proper techniques of playing a musical instrument, including how to care for the instrument.

Mrs. VanDriel is committed to growing the school's band and encourages students in grades 4 to 6 to join the band at any time during the year. She holds instrument "try-it" events for third grade students at the end of the school year, as well, in hopes that they will be interested in joining band the following year.

"The Saint Joseph band is for all students, and it's okay if they have no music experience at all," says Mrs. VanDriel. "My current students and I have fun learning about our instruments and each other in every class." Band takes place one day a week with optional practices after school, so there is not a big time commitment for the students.

This year, Saint Joseph had four students perform at the South Carolina Band Directors Association (SCBDA) Solo and Ensemble Festival, their first event outside of school. The students did a fantastic job and will be given more opportunities to perform outside of school next year.

"I love how excited my students get when they overcome a challenge in class," adds Mrs. VanDriel. "I also enjoy the many different personalities of my students and how they group together according to instrument." Dare we say, it's music to her ears!

For more information on joining the band, please e-mail Mrs. VanDriel at evandriel@stjosdevine.com.



6th Grade Awards

Saint Joseph Merit Award

Lupita Adame-Ramirez
Thomas Blake
Addie Carroll
Aiden Hartel
James Nunn
Gabby Taylor

Saint Joseph Honor Award – All A

Sarah Dayhuff
Marshall Seezen

Saint Joseph Honor Award – All A/B

Addie Carroll
Charlotte Gambrell
Sofia Gentile
Matthew Hafner
Addie Kamis
Luke Khoury
Brandon Mallon

Saint Joseph Honor Award – cont.

Ann Marie McGovern
Olivia Rowland
Gabby Taylor
Nyla Vu
Peter Wilbur

President's Education Award – Gold

Sarah Dayhuff
Marshall Seezen

President's Award – Silver

Addie Carroll
Sofia Gentile
Addie Kamis
Luke Khoury
Brandon Mallon
Olivia Rowland
Gabby Taylor
Peter Wilbur

Joseph Award

Lupita Adame-Ramirez
James Nunn

PTO Scholarship Winner

Marshall Seezen

Marian Harris Memorial Scholarship Winner

Austin Dipner