

Thursday Thoughts: The Weekly Newsletter of St. Ferdinand School



December 17, 2020

NEWS

Mitten Tree - Thank you to everyone that brought in new hats/scarves/gloves/mittens to donate to the Lydia Home for Children this Christmas season. If you have any last minute items you forgot to send, please do so before tomorrow, Friday, December 18 so we can donate the items to Lydia Home for Children.

Christmas Parties - Students will have Christmas celebrations in their homerooms tomorrow, Friday, December 18. Due to the pandemic, we ask that parents do **NOT** bring in treats/goody bags. ***Instead, we encourage you to consider picking up mittens, hats, or scarves for our mitten tree drive.*** Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

BIG SHOULDERS TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS - Big Shoulders Fund SGO will begin accepting applications for tax credit scholarships for the 2021/22 school year on Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 8:00am. Please go to <https://www.bigshouldersfundsgo.org/> for more information, and see the link included with this week's information. ***Time is of the essence --- so make sure to be prepared to log on before 8:00am in order to get a good spot.***

If you wanted a chance to practice filling out the application, an email with directions went home earlier. That document is included in the links for this week as well.

EMPOWER ILLINOIS TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS - Empower Illinois Reservations open on Wednesday, January 13. Please see the information on applying that is included in the links for this week's Thursday thoughts, or go to <https://empowerillinois.org/> ***Time is of the essence --- so make sure to be prepared to log on by 6:30pm in order to get a good spot.***

Remote Learning January 5 – 15 - The Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools will pivot to e-learning beginning for the two-week period when Christmas Break ends: **Tuesday, January 5 - Friday, January 15, 2021**. These days are not an extension of the holiday break, but instead, days in which daily check-ins, attendance at all scheduled Zoom learning sessions, and completion of remote learning projects are REQUIRED. Day Care **will** be available during this time. A separate letter will go home at a later date. Please contact the office for more information.

School Home Learning Agreement - Please continue to review the School-Home Learning Agreement that went home last week, and is included in the links. Please make sure to be following the expectations when we do our remote learning in January. A copy of this agreement was signed at the beginning of the year.

EARN A HUGE CREDIT ON YOUR ILLINOIS TAX BILL If you expect to owe any money at all to the State of Illinois on your 2021 tax return, YOU could make a HUGE impact on our school with relatively LITTLE pain to you! Any donation toward scholarships for our students, when made specifically through the Invest in Kids Illinois Tax Credit Scholarship program, will earn you a tax credit for 75% of that donation! A tax Credit is way better than a tax exemption because it is a 1:1 credit against the amount that you owe when paying your tax bill, allowing you to essentially be able to redirect 75% of your donation FROM the state TO a St. Ferdinand School student by way of a TCS Scholarship. AND, if you make your donation through Empower Illinois by mid-February, your donation will be TRIPLED through a generous, but limited, 2-for-1 matching grant! For example, a donation of \$500 automatically earns you a \$325 tax credit to use in place of money when you go to pay the state for your tax bill. If completed by mid-February, a \$500 donation also becomes \$1,500 to the school through the matching grant. Your net out of pocket cost is \$125 and the school's net gain is \$1,500 in scholarship funding! Please see flyer in today's links!

Heroes Work Here - We love our Catholic schools' employees! Teachers, leaders and support staff have worked tirelessly over the summer and the start of our school year to bring exceptional in-person and remote learning to families during this unprecedented time. To recognize their fantastic work, the Office of Catholic Schools is excited to introduce the #SchoolHero program. Educators and staff who have gone above and beyond in order to ensure a safe and productive learning environment will be highlighted through social media and the web. All school employees and families can nominate a school hero by completing a brief online form at <https://schools.archchicago.org/nominate-your-school-hero>

Illnesses/Absences from School - Just a reminder, all illnesses/absences from school must be reported in advance. Please notify the school if your child will be absent by calling the office or emailing absent@saintferdinand.org

REMINDERS

GRADES/HONOR ROLL - Please note, the grade scale for Specials Classes (Physical Education, Fine Arts, Spanish, Technology) has changed. **These classes are now using the +, S, and – grade scale.**

+ (outstanding work)
S (satisfactory work)
- (unsatisfactory work)

For the A/High Honor Roll, Grades 4-8 students need to have all A's in the subject areas still being graded, and +'s in the Specials.

For the B Honor Roll, Grades 4-8 students need to earn a combo of A's and B's (no C's or lower), and have all +'s and S's (no -'s) in the Specials.

Gym Uniforms - Please make sure you have the correct gym uniform! Last year was the final transition year for uniforms. This year, all gym uniforms should be the navy blue ones, as offered through **Dennis Uniform**. ***If you do not have the correct uniform, this will start to be reflected in your grade.***

Sweaters/ Uniforms - **As the weather is getting colder, please remember to dress appropriately ... students should now be in pants, NOT walking shorts.** Make sure to bring your St. Ferdinand School fleece sweater jacket (the Dennis Uniform one) to wear during the school day. Due to COVID, we do need to keep the windows open to provide more ventilation – and as the temperature drops outside, so does the temperature in the classroom.

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, December 21: Christmas Vacation starts!

Tuesday, January 5: Remote learning starts for 2 weeks

Tuesday, January 12: Empower Illinois Scholarship Reservations Open (starting at 6:30pm, submissions begin at 7:00 Make sure to reserve your place early!)

Wednesday, January 13: Big Shoulders Scholarship Applications Open @ 8:00am

Monday, January 18: No School, Martin Luther King Day

Tuesday, January 19: **Welcome back to in-person learning!**

Wednesday, January 27: Dine & Share at Portillo's (7308 W. Lawrence), 5:00PM – 8:00PM