

The Halo

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www.thecathedralparishschool.org

The official newsletter of St. Augustine's Catholic Elementary School
Serving students in grades K-8 and a winner of the Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence

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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2011

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Catholic schools week is January 30-February 5.

Registration has begun. Visit our website for more info.

Send us your feedback on the new Halo to

tdclemente@cpschool.org

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2011: Here we come!



Mr. Todd M. DeClemente, Principal

What an exciting 2011 it will be. Great things are happening at CPS and we couldn't be more pleased with the

direction we are heading. With great events on tap this month, and going into February, there is a tremendous sense of energy on campus. Students were geared up for the Diocesan Science Fair, Catholic School's Week is right around the corner (January 30-February 5); we have new family open house on February 3 (tell a friend!) and the Cathedral Parish Festival is scheduled for February 25-27. With all this excitement it can be hard to focus on the little things in our personal lives that really matter.

As families, the new year provides a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our personal and prayer lives. We all have great intentions with resolutions, but how about committing to more prayer time, more time with the family, reading books, or praying together? Something as simple as taking more time to say thank you to those around you... That being said, the phrase "more time" presents its own challenge. Maybe we all need to take an inventory of what gets the most of our attention during the day. Is it work, the internet, a smart phone, TV? Whatever it is, time spent on prayer and family is never wasted.



February is Festival Time

This year's festival is happening in February, and it's going to be a wild ride. You should have already received your raffle tickets. I hope you are as excited as we are! We are set to again host the largest event of its kind in St. Augustine. This event will raise funds that support all the past and future building efforts that make Cathedral Parish School and the Early Ed Center such wonderful places.



Looking for a way to get involved in the Festival?

You can volunteer to work the festival. If you own or run a business your sponsorship would give you the opportunity to reach tens of thousands of customers with your advertising. If you're interested in a sponsorship, please call Susan Hagamen (669-5918)

Catholic schools week

Catholic Schools Week is almost here! The time to honor Catholic Schools in America is January 30 through February 5th.

**New Family
OPEN
HOUSE**

February 3

**10-12 am
5-7 pm**

Tell a friend!

**Tour the
school, re-
view registration**



The Diocese has 29 Catholic schools: 4 secondary and 25 elementary

Our current enrollment is 10,372 students

Twenty one schools offer pre-kindergarten with three early centers

St. Joseph Academy is the oldest Catholic High School in the state of Florida.

The per pupil cost of educating a child in our Diocese was \$5,196 compared with the public school cost of \$9.378 (NCEA, 2009).

Diocesan elementary schools rank in the top 25% in the nation in reading in grades 3-8, more than 50% of those students perform in the top 10 percent nationally on the ITBS.

99% of our high school graduates are accepted into 2 and 4 year colleges and universities

SAT scores are 46 points higher than the national average and in 2010 we were 82 points higher than the state of Florida.



Follow these links to read about CPS in the St. Augustine Catholic Magazine and the St. Augustine Record:

[Blue Ribbon revisited by the St. Augustine Catholic: \(Go to page 18\)](#)

<http://faithcatholicdigital.com/publication/?m=5884&l=1>

[See the Kindergarten and Ms. Mirona's famous gingerbread house](#)

<http://staugustine.com/news/schools/2010-12-25/house-gingerbread>

[CPS Fire Safety contest](#)

<http://staugustine.com/news/schools/2010-11-27/cps-has-fire-safety-event>

[CPS Festival moved to February](#)

<http://staugustine.com/news/local-news/2010-11-18/cathedral-festival-moves-february>

Registration has begun for 2011-2012.

Visit our website for information!

www.thecathedralparishschool.org

Speakers in the Making

It is true that nothing of value can be gained without a lot of hard work...that is what our Woodsmen Speech Contest volunteers in 7th and 8th grade are discovering as they busily balance the preparation of their speeches with all of their other school-work. This year's topic is: *A Great American Invention*. Students are in the midst of their drafting stage, which will be followed by some useful coaching by Mrs. Bruner and Mrs. Poage. The delivery tech-



niques are valuable to the students for their 3 to 5 minute speech (without the aide of notes) as well as for their future careers. No matter what field they pursue, these skills will be beneficial.

This year's hardworking contestants are: Samantha Cosme, Paige Sharp, Scarlett Bress, Chloe Carames, Sarah Stansel, and Sophia Williar.

Pending the confirmation of judge availability, the school contest is scheduled to take place at 1:45 on March 3 in the Parish Hall.

In an effort to encourage confidence in public speaking, we have students K-7 say the pledge of allegiance over the intercom every morning and an 8th grader does the school announcements every afternoon!

Math Tutoring

Interested in math tutoring? All you have to do is sign up in Mr. Faulconer's room and math tutoring will be available to your child on Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00-3:45pm.



Congratulations to Jennifer Wai (pictured here with her English teacher, Mrs. Kings) who finished 3rd at the Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee!



Sports

The Soccer and Volleyball teams have both advanced to Catholic Conference tournaments! Both teams played well this season and represented CPS with sportsmanship and hustle. Go Saints!

We need more sports news and pictures! Please email Mr. DeClemente your Saints athletics photos.



Science Fair Success

Science Fair Winners

Overall: 1st Sam Cosme

2nd: Kiernan Mullin and Ryan Peshek

3rd Cindy Hund

Category Winners

Microbiology/Medicine and Health: Sam Cosme

Zoology/Botany: Kiernan Mullin and Ryan Peshek

Chemistry: Hila Cowart

Physics and Engineering: Delany Bolton

Behavioral and Social Science: Isabella Garofalo

Certificates of Achievement

Robert Schmidlin

Michael Woods and Jake Dewerth

Brooklyn Tringali and Natalie Guernon

Dorothy Windish and Amanda Powell

Nicole Capo

Ashley Capo

Lucy Yelton

Noah Orr Kynard

Chloe Carames

Kyle Wai



Matriculating to Diocese

Kiernan Mullin

Noah Orr Kynard

Sam Cosme

Chloe Carames

Matriculating to County

Brittany Tringali and Natalie Guernon

Kyle Wai

Delany Bolton

Cindy Hund

Hila Cowart

Mrs. Mullin with Science Fair Winner

Sam Cosme.

Thank you, Mrs. Mullin, for your hard work. The Science Showcase was a great event.



Representatives from St. Joseph Academy were here on campus on January 19th to spend time with our 8th graders, pass out t-shirts and to provide registration packets to take home. Visit www.sjaweb.org to learn more about St. Augustine's Catholic High School.



ITBS

HOW DID WE DO?

One of the most popular parent topics right now pertains to the ITBS. Some inquiries involve trying to get a good sense of what ITBS scores really mean and how they impact each child's education. It's important to note a few things: First, the test provides the school with some important feedback about our academic programs and the relative success of our methods. It gives us an opportunity to reflect on our timelines and evaluate our curriculum. For parents, it provides some objective feedback, a performance analysis of sorts, which can be interpreted along with students in class performance to gauge their aptitudes and areas for growth.

The ITBS is a "norm referenced" test, which means students are being evaluated based on how they did in comparison to all the other students of the same grade level who took the test at the same time. Some have asked if our scores would be higher if we tested in the spring, after a few more months of instruction, but the truth is our scores are only "normed" in comparison to all others who took the test in the fall.

The classroom is more of a criterion referenced environment, in that a student is being judged based on their aptitude relative to skill mastery, rather than compared to the student sitting next to them. Being an achievement test, the ITBS provides you with a nice measure of where your child stands among all students in their grade, so long as you keep in mind that your teacher (via the course grade or a conference) can share real time information regarding skill mastery.

In addition to being used for student analysis and curriculum development, the scores are also used by the Department of Education as part of the Blue Ribbon process. We can proudly say that our scores have measured quite well nationally in the past and continue to be a shining example of the effectiveness of Catholic education. That said, we do not publish our group scores in the same way as schools publish FCAT, SAT or ACT scores.

I encourage you to ask questions of your child's teacher regarding their scores and progress, especially if you have a specific area of concern, or if you feel that their test scores are not reflective of their class performance. I also invite you to contact the school if you have other questions about the ITBS.

A few things to note regarding our scores as a school:

Our school ranks in the top 10-15% nationally in nearly every category and grade. In some cases our grade level national percentile ranking (NPR) is higher than it was in the Blue Ribbon year!

Some observations:

Looking at the last few years, especially since the introduction of Saxon math, our upper grade scores have been incredible. This year's 7th grade composite (meaning the ranking of all kids in the 7th grade) stood in the 90th percentile (picture the old bell curve which puts this class in the top 2% in the country). At the same time, some of the younger grade scores in math have been slightly lower than expected given the consistent performance of those same groups as they continue at CPS. One insight regarding the Saxon math program shows that the pace early in the program is slightly slower so as to reinforce a strong conceptual foundation, which enables kids to develop good fundamental skills and to gain efficacy. These two, working in concert, allow their scores to fly past the norms once they get to the 4th and 5th grades, and on into junior high. This of course is to say that the program works, but it takes some time.

We are also evaluating the impact of the new reading series and its pacing. Reading scores overall stayed level in the lower grades and moved up slightly in the upper grades.

Ask Mr. D:

Q: What's going on with plans for the 2nd and 3rd grades for next year?

A: The school advisory board, at my recommendation and supported by Father Tom, has decided to pursue funding that would allow us to put two teachers back into our roster of highly qualified professionals currently teaching at CPS. It's an expensive move that is still awaiting final approval, but we feel like it's an important consideration for our school. In the end, we all need to work together to tell the great stories of CPS to bring our enrollment back where it belongs.,



Did you know that we collected over a thousand canned goods for Catholic Charities?

KIDS ON CAMPUS

WHAT DID THE CAMERA CATCH YOURS DOING?



Cathedral Parish School

St. Augustine's Catholic K-8

Mission Statement

We, the Catholic Community of Cathedral Parish School, will be examples of Christian teachings, will serve others as Jesus would, will achieve academic excellence, and put Christ first in all we do.

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Go Saints!

We want to include more pictures of your children... please make sure that have completed your Photo Consent form and share great school shots with us when you can!

I hope you like the new Halo format. It's sure to grow as time goes on. I welcome your suggestions!

TD



THE HALO



Here's what you can do to help...

Collect empty inkjet cartridges, laser cartridges and used cell phones from your home or office. Drop them off at the locations listed below. We can recycle them to earn free equipment or cash!

A Message from Our Coordinator

Drop off your used ink/toner cartridges and used cell phones in the white box in our school lobby

Drop Off Locations

Bring your ink cartridges to the computer lab!