



ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Dear St. Charles Parents,

At the end of each year, we usually gather for a “State of the School Address” in Doran Hall. We usually have a power point presentation, time for celebration and conversation, and of course, a little entertainment. That is how it usually goes, but this year is completely unusual so that is why I’m writing a report on the year instead. There are some things that we set out to accomplish this year and did, there are other things that we did not accomplish.

One of the priorities that we were able to accomplish this year outside of our strategic plan was the review of our social studies curriculum. Our review team was able to present recommendations at the beginning of March, and it was great to complete this process before the pandemic hit. The K-5 review team selected Pearson’s *My World*, series. This was the first choice of the teacher who will be using it, and they were all in agreement on this. We are excited to put these new resources to use! In grade 6, we are going to be using a text from the Catholic Publishing Project called, *All Ye Lands*. This name may sound familiar because we have used this text in the past. This is an updated version, and we feel that it is the best resource for teaching world history and culture, which is the focus of 6th grade social studies. We will be using the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt texts to teach world geography in grade 7 and United States history in grade 8. We are also excited about what these new resources will bring to our middle school students.

We were fortunate to be able to complete the process of drafting a new school philosophy. The new philosophy is tied closely to the mission the we drafted five years ago. It was important for us to bring these two important statements into harmony.

The Reaching All Learners (RAL) committee was able to assemble many good ideas and possibilities for a plan. Unfortunately, progress was stopped due to the pandemic, and we do not have a complete plan. However, we will be moving forward with some of the strategies while we are finalizing the plan in the year ahead. One of these strategies is the use of flexible grouping in math for grades 3-5 and training for Guided Math in grades K-2. Our teachers will have the support of an instructional coach who will assist with the implementation of these strategies. In grades 6-8, we are looking at scheduling possibilities that would allow ability grouping for math. There will be more information coming this summer on all of this.

The Covid-19 pandemic made a lot of things difficult this year. I would say that our greatest accomplishment was how our staff, parents, and students responded to the crisis. Our staff used a total of four scheduled school days for professional development, planning, and preparing for distance learning to take place. These were some of the most difficult days in the careers of many of my new and veteran teachers. Because of the restrictions, we had to do it all from a distance. Although this crisis limited what we were able to accomplish this year, our response was clearly a success, and I am extremely proud of the St. Charles staff, parents, and students.

Our parents participation in the distance learning survey was extremely valuable this year. I previously communicated some of the results that helped us to shape how we completed the year with distance learning. Here is an overview of the changes we made as a result of the survey:

4th Grade Email

We will enable 4th grade email so that 4th grade students may email the 4th grade teachers and receive responses from the 4th grade teachers. All other Gmail activity will remain blocked. If you would not like your 4th grader to have this access, please make their homeroom teacher aware.

Google Comments in Google Classroom

Google Comments will remain available for teachers to make comments on students' work. The comment will be attached to and pertain to a particular assignment. Teachers may also use Google Comments as a discussion board as a part of an assignment. **Google Comments are not to be used for general communication between teachers and parents.** General communications that solicit a response from the teacher should be handled via email. This will ensure your message is received in a timely manner by the teacher.

Google Meetings

Google Meetings will be set up as assignments and given a due date even though there is nothing due and there is nothing to turn in. This is so the Meet will show up on a student's "To Do" list in Google Classroom. Parents will be notified of these meetings via email at least 24 hours before they take place.

More Interaction with Teachers

On the survey, there were a number of requests for more interaction between teachers and parents. Please utilize teacher office hours to schedule phone calls or meetings if your child needs additional support with schoolwork or would just like to speak with or see their teacher.

More Interaction with Peers

Each class will continue to have 1-2 Google Meetings per week online so that students may interact with their classmates. We suggest setting up your own separate virtual meetings on the platform of your choice for additional interaction with classmates and school friends. There will be an email sent soon to verify your household school directory information. Once this is updated, it will be a helpful way to get contact information for a classmate's household and to set up your own virtual meetings.

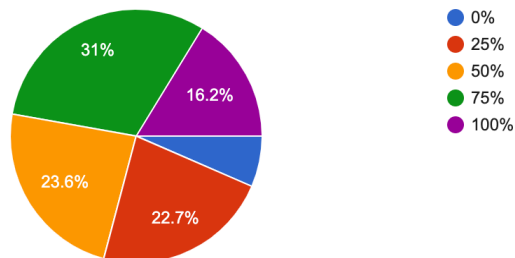
Student Privacy Online

Parents, please **do not** allow your son or daughter privacy online. It is important to us that you know their Google Account password and monitor their online activity. Please check their browser history periodically to make sure they are not visiting unwanted or inappropriate websites. Please let your child know that the school has the ability to check their browsing history, even if they delete it. Supervision is key when children are online. Please make sure you check on them and do not allow them to be in a room with a device and a closed door.

Survey Snapshots

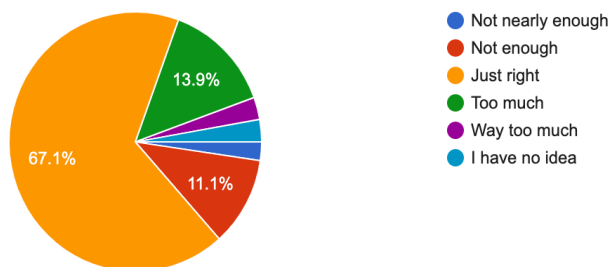
How much distance learning can your child handle on their own?

216 responses



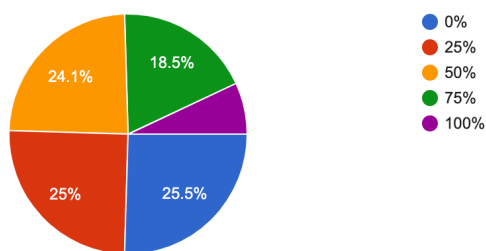
In my opinion, the amount of work being assigned in distance learning is:

216 responses

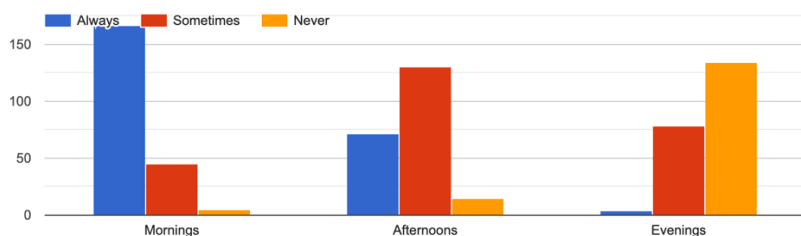


How much of the support you provide is related to your child's ability to use technology?

216 responses



What time does your child generally participate in distance learning?



Looking at fundraising this year our Marathon in the fall was successful once again raising over \$50,000. Our McSherry/Hickman Basketball Blast was an amazing success raising over \$30,000 that went to The Make a Wish Foundation and The Sue McSherry Scholarship Fund. Our Annual fund has done well, but without the contribution of the Borromeo Bash, we have decided to run a summer campaign as mentioned in a recent Weekly Update. I look forward to launching this opportunity to make an investment in our schools future during the month of June. More details to come on that.

As I have said, you will be hearing more from me this summer than you have in past years. There are things that I am still wrapping up from this year that I'll want to update you on, and there are many plans to be made for the year ahead. I'm sure you understand that everything is running just a bit behind schedule. I want to thank you for your hard work, your partnership, and your commitment to our mission of "Making disciples of Jesus Christ who strive for excellence in faith, virtue, service & academics."

God bless you,

Danny Kieffer
St. Charles Principal