



November 1st, 2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your commitment to Catholic education and your ability to navigate the many moving parts that we face this year. We are hopeful that there will be news on adjustments to guidelines, metrics, and protocols for returning to school campuses this week from Governor Brown.

It is ever important to emphasize a positive, collaborative faith community in each school. With continued social distancing and remote learning, our students, teachers, staff, and families are, by circumstance, deprived of important relationship building opportunities. It is incumbent upon us to ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and compassion as we patiently work through what will best serve our mission and students in these circumstances

The holiday season is arriving quickly! As we look forward to the many joys the season brings, we are aware of the immense stressors present during this unique year. Please take care of yourself and others around you in our community. Please remember the week of December 14-18th will be digital instruction for all K-8 students. This allows our staff to be able to quarantine before seeing family for Christmas. We have many staff members who have not seen extended family since early August in order to keep family members safe from COVID exposure. OLL will bring you some Christmas joy on December 17th, the night of our annual Christmas concert. Our music teacher, Wendy Goodwin, is in the process of creating plans for an incredible school-wide music video experience which will debut the evening of December 17th! Please read all correspondence from Wendy Goodwin. Mrs. Goodwin will seek help and support from parents and the participation of all students.

I hope you will join us for the 2021 auction that will take place virtually on February 6th, 2021. Please visit the [auction webpage](#) if you haven't yet had a chance to do so. The school depends on the auction to offset all school costs other than staff salaries.

Budget and Open House

The school finance team is working hard on creating the 2021-2022 school budget. Each December the principal is expected to present the school budget to the Parish board. Our goal is to get the budget approved before Open House on January 31st. We want to be able to communicate the tuition costs at Open House so incoming families know what to expect. Open House will, of course, be in a different format this year. We have hired a videographer to create inspiring and inviting content to share across many platforms, and we are planning a virtual event for January 31st. Please keep this date in mind and invite any friends who may be interested in OLL!

STAR Renaissance Testing

The 2020 school year has posed many unique challenges, one of which has been standardized testing through the Renaissance STAR Testing platform. Many of the protocols for standardization were altered this year as the

tests were proctored at home. We were no longer able to control for variables like internet connectivity, student-parent interaction, or home-based distractions like pets and siblings.

Regardless of the barriers, we launched testing in October in order to get an idea of student scores after months of distance learning last spring followed by summer vacation. Please know that we are taking the initial student screening with a grain of salt, but still using it as a data point to measure growth and progress.

As a school, we seem to have avoided the dreaded “COVID slide” that concerns many parents and schools. When reading below, please consider the fact that we have welcomed 56 new students this year. Last year’s results were based on grades 1-8, while this year we only tested 2-8. We decided to have the first grade class participate in the Early Literacy test since the final three months of kindergarten were disrupted due to the closure of school. The data for 2020 does not reflect kindergarten or first grade results at this time.

Fall 2020 - Reading

| <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Number of students</u> | <u>Overall %</u> | <u>Fall ‘19 by comparison</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 75th-99th | 85 | 42% | 88 |
| 50th-74th | 65 | 32% | 72 |
| 25th-49th | 37 | 18% | 34 |
| 1st-24th | 15 | 8% | 14 |
| Totals | 202 | 100% | 208 |

- 74% of our students (150 of 202) are proficient in reading.
- **COVID Comparison** = 77% of our students (161 of 208) were proficient in reading in fall 2019.
- As a school we are down just 3% compared to last year at this same time

Fall 2020 - Math

| <u>Percentile</u> | <u>Number of students</u> | <u>Overall %</u> | <u>Fall ‘19 by comparison</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| 75th-99th | 117 | 59% | 126 |
| 50th-74th | 41 | 21% | 40 |
| 25th-49th | 29 | 15% | 32 |
| 1st-24th | 13 | 7% | 6 |
| Totals | 200 | 100% | 204 |

- 79% of students (158 out of 200) are proficient in math.
- **COVID Comparison** = 82% of students (166 out of 204) are proficient in math in fall 2019.

- As a school, we are also down about 3% from last year

As for math, our accelerated program continues to turn out high level achievers. The graduating class of 2020 had an average Percentile Rank of 91%. Our current 7th and 8th grade advanced math groups average at the 94th and 93rd Percentile Ranks respectively.

Initially, our accelerated program moved its students through the 9th grade Algebra I curriculum by the end of 8th grade, but three years ago, we added a 10th grade Geometry section as well. What started as an extension class for one student has grown phenomenally. The class of 2021 will graduate thirteen students from its Geometry class in addition to the six who are in the Algebra I group.

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School uses STAR data not only to identify gaps in learning, but also to identify students who aren't making expected growth. Even students who test in the upper quartile are eligible to receive interventions and extensions to the curriculum if data shows they aren't making acceptable progress.

As a school, our goal is always to move as many students into the upper two quartiles as possible. This year, teachers will continue to identify students who show gaps in learning and intentionally create individualized interventions to close those gaps. Growth will be measured through STAR Assessments in November, January, and May. You can expect communication from your child's ELA and Math teachers regarding the upcoming STAR testing window, to be completed prior to November 20th.

In the past, we were able to print the STAR Parent Report and share it with parents during conferences, which were in person. Having completed virtual conferences we have been presented the challenge of how to share testing information with parents. For the initial Fall screening, we will be sharing STAR Parent Reports per request rather than by mail.

In grades K-3, please notify your child's homeroom teacher if you would like to receive copies of the STAR Parent Report.

In grades 4th-8th, please use [this form](#) to request a copy of your child's records.

2021 Return to School

In the New Year, we are excited to welcome our fourth and fifth graders back onto campus. Students in fourth and fifth grades will begin the Limited In-Person Instruction model starting in January as long as it is still safe to do so. More information will be forthcoming as OLL solidifies plans.

These past few weeks with K-3 students on campus have been heartwarming and full of joy, and we are praying that we will be given the opportunity to welcome more students on campus soon. While so many aspects of our day-to-day life at OLL look different, there is so much that remains the same: our commitment to the high achievement of all learners and our desire to teach all students live out our school mission statement to "Act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with Our God," (Micah 6:8).

God Bless,

Corrine Buich
Principal

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School