



St. Francis of Assisi Middle School

Principals' Report

Monday, May 12, 2025

Be Joyful----Be Loving----Be Humble----Be Forgiving

KUDOS

To Our Amazing School Council and Parent Community: We are so grateful for your generosity and thoughtfulness during last week's Teacher Appreciation Week. Your delicious salad bar lunch and sweet chocolate bar treat were such a thoughtful way to celebrate and care for our staff. Your kindness filled both our stomachs and our hearts—thank you for going above and beyond to make us feel valued and appreciated!

STAFF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOCUS

School Focus for the 2024-25 school year:

- **FAITH:** focusing on the word 'serve' in our Faith Theme. Our focus will be to continue to nurture and foster faith in our staff and students throughout the year.
- **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:** Total Participation Techniques & Newly established Student Engagement Team (SET) Collaborative Groups:
 - Indigenous Education Support
 - Wellness
 - Literacy
 - Numeracy
 - CTF

May Learning Focus:

- **TRANSITIONS:** Focusing on a thoughtful and meaningful creation of class lists for the 2025-26 school year. Staff work collaboratively to build balanced class groupings that support both academic and social well-being. During this 3-4 step process we take great care to consider a wide range of factors, ensuring that each student is placed in an environment where they can thrive. It's just one of the many ways we plan ahead to set our students up for a successful year.
- **FAITH:** Breaking bread together as a community
- **DATA:** Schoology, ISP, Transition Meetings.

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

2025-2026 Student Population Projection

- 632 students Grade 6 to Grade 9 (23 less students than 24-25)

Grade 6 (5 classes)	Grade 7 (5 classes)	Grade 8 (6 classes)	Grade 9 (6 classes)
147	150	150	188

Staffing Update

We want to share a few staffing updates with our school community:

- **Mrs. Heather Chatwood** is currently on a short leave and is expected to return on **May 26th**. In her absence, **Mrs. Macailee Finnigan** is supporting students as the substitute teacher. We're grateful for Mrs. Finnigan's care and commitment during this time.
- Please join us in extending heartfelt **congratulations to Mr. Todd Jansen** on his upcoming **retirement at the end of June**. We are deeply thankful for his years of dedication and service to our school community and look forward to celebrating him in the coming weeks.

Faith

School Wide Easter/Pentecost Mass - led by Mr. Jansen, and grade 6-2 students on May 7th

Faith Fact Fridays - Introducing Pope Leo XIV

Inspired by Christ on a Journey to Encounter, Nurture and Serve.

Extracurriculars

- Student Council
- Dungeons and Dragons

Upcoming

- School Wide School Dance - Summer Send Off: June 6th 4-6 PM
- Grade 8 Indigenous Youth: Inspiring Youth Success Conference: May 26th
- Grade 7&8 Qualifying Track & Field Day @ Thurber: May 27th
- Grade 9 Indigenous Youth Science Perspectives Day: May 28th
- Field Trips:
 - Grade 9 - Outdoor Ed - May 30 Coliseum Mountain
 - Grade 8 - Outdoor Ed - June 6 Heritage Ranch
 - Grade 7 - June 17 RTM Drumheller
 - Grade 8 - June 18 -Telus Spark CGY
 - Grade 6 - June 24 Museum/Rec Cen
- Way of the Wolf - gr. 6&7
- Alpha - gr. 8&9
- Grade 9 Farewell Fun Activities: June 3rd
- Grade 9 Qualifying Track & Field Day @ Thurber: June 4th
- Grade 6 All Students Track & Field Day @ Thurber: June 5th
- Grade 9 Farewell @ St. Mary's: June 5th @ 5PM
- Grades 7,8 and 9: Band Tour: June 6th

ADVISORY QUESTION

Supporting a Smooth Transition from Grade 5 to Middle School

As we prepare to welcome our incoming Grade 6 students each year, we are committed to creating a smooth and supportive transition experience. Our current transition plan includes:

- **School counsellor visits** to each feeder elementary school to introduce middle school life.
- **A Grade 5 visit day** where students tour the school, engage in activities, and are welcomed by our **Grade 8 student ambassadors**.
- **A Parent Information Night** to help families learn more about our programs, routines, and expectations.
- **Collaboration between Grade 5 teachers and our school team** to create balanced and thoughtful class lists.
- Transition meetings between our **counselling and inclusion teams** and their elementary counterparts to discuss student supports and accommodations.

As parents and guardians, your perspective is incredibly valuable.

We are seeking your insights on the following:

- From your experience or viewpoint, what aspects of this transition process are working well?
- Are there additional supports, events, or resources you believe would be helpful for students and families during this time?
- How might we better communicate or connect with families to ease the transition to middle school?

Your feedback will help us continue to refine our practices and ensure that every student and family feels prepared and welcomed as they begin their middle school journey.

SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Parents often ask how they can best support their child's classroom teacher and the school community. Ask your child specific questions at the end of the day that are framed in a positive manner that promotes a growth mindset. For example:

- ☐ What was your favourite part of the day today?
- ☐ What did you do during recess?
- ☐ What made your teacher smile today? What made him/her frown?
- ☐ Who is the friendliest person in your class?
- ☐ What are you looking forward to at school tomorrow?
- ☐ Tell me about something kind you did for someone today. Did someone do something nice for you?
- ☐ Who is someone at school who could use a friend?
- ☐ Tell me something that made you laugh today.
- ☐ What are you looking forward to tomorrow at school?

Thank you to all families for:

- Communicating respectfully and thoughtfully to teachers - in emails, on the phone and in face-to-face communications
- Supporting your child with their learning goals
- Meeting your commitments with transportation & school fees, and staying in touch with the office if you need extra time or consideration
- Supporting your child's social-emotional growth: learning the value of good manners, appreciating differences, contributing to the greater good, saying sorry, learning to forgive, working hard and playing hard too, being kind to ourselves and to one another, the power of prayer, giving service to others...

PARENT COMMUNICATION

We will be continuing with our week at a glance, which is posted on our website and emailed to parents. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to discuss questions or concerns with the classroom teacher or school administration. Teachers welcome parents to contact them directly by calling the school or sending them a message. Please note that if they are teaching, on supervision or unable to take your call we ask that you leave a message and they will get back to you by the next work day. In our commitment to honour family time, we will work hard not to send messages between the hours of 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM unless there is an emergency.



SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Council is a means for parents and the community to work together to support and enhance student learning. School Council provides a venue for parents to reflect on their wishes for the broader community of education of their students and to actively participate in giving advice and support to the principal.

Roles that are not to be taken on by a School council include:

- School governance
- Employment issues
- School management
- Listening to complaints.

Thank you to our parents for continuing to work in a team to meet the goals of the School Council.

