



September 2017

Grandparents Go Back to Class

Surely our StMS grandparents remembered their own school days as they visited our school last week and participated in many engaging lessons. It was wonderful to see them working side-by-side with their grandchildren, tackling a writing assignment, a math problem or completing a puzzle. Many thanks to our teachers for preparing many challenging and fun activities.



Here are some of the activities our children and grandparents experienced together:

In Mrs. Tinsley's PreK classroom, grandparents joined in circle time for morning board. Then they enjoyed dancing "Tooty Ta" together! Students said a special prayer for their grandparents and made a wall hanging with the prayer so grandparents could remember the special day.

In Mrs. McElroy's Kindergarten classroom, grandparents made a picture frame or built a toothpick structure, completed a puzzle or read books. Everyone enjoyed Bingo, minute games, and recess.

In our Grade 1 classrooms, Mrs. Gay and Mrs. Adams helped the students and grandparents create family trees, a photo frame for a photo of the grandparent and grandchild, and a special Grandmother/Grandfather book.

Ms. Rosia's Grade 2 students made glyphs with their grandparents that tell about their family and some favorite things. They also enjoyed playing partner math games.

Mrs. Munoz's Grade 4 students enjoyed interviewing their grandparents about their childhood, young adult, and senior life. They compared and contrasted the childhood favorites of grandparents with students today. They also played a quick game of multiplication bingo, and grandparents were amazed with the students' quick recall! Grandparents also had fun with some English language arts games, usually surprising their grandchildren with their knowledge.

Mrs. Wisniewski's Grade 4 homeroom, some students read a book about babysitting Grandma and Grandpa, then everyone read a poem about how kind, sweet, giving, and loving they are to the grandchildren. After this, the students conducted interviews to find out more about their Grandparent's life.... where they were born, where they have lived, jobs they have had, favorite job, favorite teacher and grade, etc.

In Grade 5, Ms. Corcoran and Ms. Norins' students joined together to create a greeting card for their grandparents as well as a family tree. They finished the projects with their Grandparents on Friday morning.

Mrs. Bohinski's Math 6 class, the students used an interactive game, Kahoots, to review order of operations and practice performing operations with decimals. Grandparents were invited to sit with their student and help the student select the correct answer, and then everyone discussed why the answer is correct or incorrect.

Mrs. Ciesla Grade 6 homeroom students were able to spend two class periods with grandparents in English Language Arts class. They did a variety of activities which began with the sharing of a special letter written by the grandchild to their about how much they mean to them. Next, they interviewed each other posing questions that helped them learn more about what their interests were when they were their grandchild's age. Finally, students showed grandparents how to use the Chromebook to do a Then and Now research activity. They compared and contrasted what life was like for them at their grandchild's age: Cost of living, entertainment, fashion, music, etc. It was an interesting and fun lesson for everyone.

Dr. Madern's Grade 7 & 8 students provided information on the history of Grandparents' Day and then everyone enjoyed a video of Red Skelton (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZBTyTWOZCM>)

Mrs. Cline enjoyed having grandparents visit the Media Center. For her first-grade class she read the story "Llama Llama Gram and Grandpa" by Anna Dewdney to the children and their grandparents. This is a sweet story about Llama's sleepover with the grandparents. Mrs. Cline's third-grade students enjoyed the story "My Grandfather's Coat". This story is about reusing a coat until there is nothing left and

sharing the memories that go with cloth from the coat as it is passed down to the youngest family member. Grandparents then had the chance to share some of their own stories.

To see all Grandparents' Day photos, please visit our Flickr page:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/stmscary/albums>

StMS Technology: Continuous Improvement

By Mrs. Amy Reitz, Director of Technology Integration

As we start the new school year, there are several exciting updates and changes to our technology program at St. Michael Catholic School to report.

The most exciting change is the new technology lab, now located on the first floor in Mrs. Dries' former Spanish classroom. The new location and arrangement of work space allows for more collaboration



between students when working on assignments and projects. The technology lab is equipped with 32 new Lenovo Tiny desktop devices with the Windows 10 operating system, which allow students to extend the learning from the regular classroom.

PRISM - Pilot for Rigorous Instruction at St. Michael - has added a new group of students! Sixth grade students were given new Lenovo 11E Chromebooks last week to use as a part of this innovative learning opportunity. Seventh grade students, who were the first members of PRISM last year,

continue to use their devices during the school day this year, as well as serve as role models and mentors to our sixth graders. Teachers will continue to collaborate with Dr. Lisa Hervey, professor from the Friday Institute at NC State University, building upon the foundation set last year to enhance instruction and promote student growth and achievement.

STAR returns this fall with new members eager to assist students and teachers with technology. STAR (Student Technical Assistance Resource) students take on various tasks, such as helping to distribute Chromebook carts to classrooms, record events to be shared with others, update the new TV display in the school office, and are even initiating our school's Broadcast Club. Students were chosen for this opportunity based on teacher nominations of students who exemplified our core values of **reverence, service and leadership**, as well as integrity and a strong work ethic.







To make technology more accessible to students during the school day, more iPads were distributed to Kindergarten through Grade 5. The iPads offer students a chance to learn and create:

- Learn through developing or strengthening skills taught in the classroom with apps specific to grade level content or using web browsers to access various online tools and programs;
- Create through apps like iMovie and 30 Hands, giving students a chance to display what they've learned through video and interactive slideshows.

iPads are also available to the middle school classrooms, giving all students a chance to explore the same creative learning opportunities.

StMS Welcomes New Faculty

St. Michael School welcomed several new faculty and staff members in August. We're so glad they are now part of our community.

<p>Mrs. Peggy Lane came onboard this summer as our Assistant Principal. She and her daughter, Alyssa (4), are both enjoying being a part of the St. Michael community.</p>	
<p>Mrs. Colleen Mangan joins us as our Front Office Assistant. She and her husband, Michael, are the parents of Rose (2), and Sean (K). Miss Colleen enjoys greeting students and parents and scheduling school tours for prospective families.</p>	
<p>Ms. Natasha Norins teaches Grade 5. This is her 15th year of teaching. She enjoys spending her free time with her 7-year-old rescue dog, a Cairn terrier.</p>	
<p>Mrs. Stephanie Sosa, an StMS parent, joined us this year to teach Grade 3. She and her husband, Daniel, are parents to three StMS students: Gianna (K), Isabella (2), and Sophia (5).</p>	
<p>Mrs. Krista Giddings is a new Instructional Teacher Assistant working in Kindergarten with Mrs. Deb Sunday. She and her husband are the parents of Emma and Evan, and she's excited to spend her days with Kindergarten students.</p>	
<p>Mrs. Marie Robert, Instructional Teacher Assistant, works in Grade 3 with Mrs. Stephanie Sosa. She and her husband, Roberto Rodriguez, are the parents of StMS PreK student Patricia Rodriguez-Robert.</p>	

Mrs. Colleen Pirozzi is our new Athletic Director. She's a busy wife and mother of three who has worked as a juvenile probation officer and a case worker at a therapeutic wilderness camp for boys.



Mr. Jim Walling is now working with Mrs. Pirozzi as a part-time Athletic Director. Jim is Ms. Megan O'Donnell's father and is excited to be working with the StMS Athletic Department.



Middle School Math Lab Activities Build Critical Skills

Three times a week, all Middle School students meet for Math Lab and have the opportunity to apply concepts learned in math class in a variety of ways. Often students work in a collaborative environment on a particular project that allows for enhancement of critical thinking skills and real-world application, sometimes with a STEM (science, Technology, Engineering, Math) focus. Lab also allows time for differentiation and review of past concepts for a test as well as extra time to practice essential skills through technology, problem sets, and a variety of math activities to reinforce learning of concepts.

Working in teams of three, Mr. Cipriano Laga's students recently created marble runs. Twisting and turning paths of different heights were created and marbles traveled down the "run". Students measured the height of the ramp and the rate of descent, comparing and contrasting their data with that of other teams.

The next project will be to construct a bridge made of index cards and then test its strength by placing pennies on the bridge until it falls. Students will become engineers as they think of different ways to construct the bridge to strengthen it.

On the first day of school, Mrs. Marianne Bohinski's Grade 6 students enjoyed the challenge of the Cup and String Game. The



small groups were tasked with stacking six plastic drinking cups in a pyramid – without touching the cups. They were, however, given a rubber band and string tool. This fun exercise created an opportunity for students to use critical thinking skills, practice their dexterity, and work as a team.

Mrs. Bohinski's focus is for her students to realize how math is used in their own lives and explore how math connects with other curriculum areas. The next project will connect math, science, technology and nutrition and employ students to collect their own data by using a chart to record the calories eaten each day. After making mathematical calculations, they will then be able to



chart their number of calories eaten for a week on a graph which will then serve as the springboard to discovering the meaning of ‘the mean (average) of the data’!

Mrs. Siobhan Brown’s Grade 8 students have used their time in Math Lab to plan a vacation. Working in pairs, students have a budget of \$3,000. Keeping within this budget, they must plan a vacation to another state in the U.S., providing for the costs of travel, accommodation, food, and activities. Students are looking forward to presenting their vacation plans in class.

When Fr. Edison recently visited classrooms, he commented enthusiastically, “I never knew Math could be so much fun in Middle School!”

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