



August 20, 2018

Dear Good Shepherd Families,

Greetings, Welcome, Bonjour, Hola and Hello! I could not be more excited to begin this year with all of you. The 2018-2019 school year is in our sights, so to mark the eventual end of the summer, here is your “Back to School” letter. Enclosed below, you will see my introduction, an introduction to some of our new faculty members and important beginning-of-the-year information.

“Prepare a path for God so He can enter your heart.” – St. John Baptist de La Salle

I start my first letter to you all with a quote from the Patron Saint of Christian Teachers and the individual that bears the name of my alma mater: La Salle University. I also find it extremely fitting to read so much about the recent Middle States Association re-accreditation process that occurred last year at Good Shepherd where one of our action plans revolves around service for others. As I had mentioned in my introduction at Mass back in June, I believe God puts us where he wants us. As we embark on another academic year full of possible excitement and even possible anxiety for what will be, let us be mindful that we are vessels of the Holy Spirit hopefully preparing a path for God.

One main theme that has been interwoven in many of the discussions I have had with my staff and parents, coupled with the surveys I have read, is the emphasis on Good Shepherd School being a small, family atmosphere. I am very happy and pleased to be a new member of this new ‘family’ along with the following individuals who stood out among the many, many applicants for our open positions. Let us please welcome:

2nd: Miss Morgan Harris

3rd: Miss Alexandra Tralie

4th: Mrs. Laura Coulehan

5th: Mrs. Karen Higgins

ELA: Mr. Joseph Regina

If you would like to get to know these individuals a little bit better, pictures of their signings as well as each mini-biography are found on our Facebook page @goodshepherdcollingswood. Our website has been freshened up a bit and now has our Facebook feed in case you are not on that piece of Social Media. Once on the homepage on the right-hand side, you will see our Facebook link, place your cursor over that area which should then show a scroll bar to help you navigate to see our recent posts.

Important Information and Dates

The Camden Diocese switched Information Services from Cornerstone to RenWeb. Information will be forthcoming, but all information that was in Cornerstone has been transferred over to the new system. It will be imperative that you check your family sheet coming home in the first week to make sure all family contact information including home address, phone (cell included) numbers and email addresses are up to date.

To conserve resources, we will be trying to use email more and more to disseminate information. We will continue to have the family communication folders, but we are hoping to curtail the unnecessary printing of paper. It will be the goal that we will be able to make school-wide distributions available on our website so anyone who may need can access the paperwork at any time.

For all school days, all K-8 students will enter through the parking lot doors on Lees Avenue. If you are not participating in our AM Eagle’s NEST program (see below), please plan to arrive between 7:50 and 8:10 AM. The school day will begin at 8:15 AM in the Cafeteria where we will have our morning Prayer Service and announcements. After 8:15 AM, all students arriving LATE will need to enter through the Main Entrance doors on Atlantic Avenue and receive a LATE slip. Accumulating LATENESSES will result in consequences.

Pre-K 3+4 Students will need to be escorted by an adult that is listed on the student's emergency form. All Preschool students will enter by the side door across from the parish offices. More details for PreK will be given at your orientation on August 29th.

Students must be in full summer or winter uniform on the first day of school. Please refer to our student handbook (posted online in the "Parents→ GSS Parent's Info" section). A reminder that all white sneakers are worn for gym class and the summer uniform. No colored hair, nail polish or extreme hair styles will be allowed.

Our Before- and After-School Program has a new name with the same great care. If you are interested in participating in the AM or PM Eagle's NEST (Nurturing, Educational, Supportive, Trusted) Program, please visit the website for the application and necessary forms. Please send the application with the \$5 administrative fee into the office as soon as possible. The AM and PM Eagle's NEST will begin the first week of school on Thursday September 6th, so it will be necessary for the office to receive the necessary paperwork that is found in this mailing and is located on the website. The AM session runs 6:30-8:00 AM and PM runs from dismissal until 6:00 PM.

Back to School Night will be on Thursday September 13, 2018 beginning with a general meeting in the cafeteria at 6 PM. At least one parent must attend.

On the first day of school, we will be having a special guest join us for our Opening Prayer Service. Bishop Dennis Sullivan will be spending the morning with our community and we cannot be happier and more blessed to have our Faith Leader present to kick off our school year. Parents are welcome to come to our prayer service and stay after for coffee and treats, provided by our GSS Parent's Association.

PARENTS!!!

There is a sports cliché used in coaching circles that the word TEAM stands for Together Everyone Achieves More. Even though this may be a cliché, it is true to where our students... your child(ren)... benefit from your activity to enhance *his/her/their* experience(s). Many dedicated parents and volunteers donate their time, talent and treasure to ensure the students of Good Shepherd have positive experiences. However, we can *ALWAYS* use more people who are willing to help. If you have not responded to my survey, please consider doing so (the link is found on the same webpage as the student handbook).

St. Ignatius of Loyola stated, "God gives each one of us sufficient grace ever to know His holy will, and to do it fully." When I arrived at Good Shepherd, I have felt this grace being greeted with open arms, willing hearts and an incredible staff. We will be ready to do God's holy will this upcoming year and I am looking forward to our partnership in educating your child(ren). Thank you for your commitment to Good Shepherd and I look forward to seeing you shortly.

Sincerely,

Ray Bonnette, Principal