

Saint Benedict House System

PTO Meeting - September 19, 2019

Description:

The tradition of school Houses goes back to English boarding schools. The Houses offered a home away from home for the boys and a natural source of friendly rivalry and competition. Many high schools and grade schools, both public and private, throughout the United States have adapted this type of system for their own schools. At our school, we have four Houses, and each student belongs to a House. We keep siblings together in the same House.

Purpose:

1) COMMUNITY - The House system will further increase the strong sense of Christian community at St. Benedict. It will provide a forum for new families to be welcomed and returning students to feel a sense of belonging. It will provide smaller communities that each student will be a part of - a safe and welcoming environment for all students, with built in service opportunities.

2) LEADERSHIP - The House system will promote building virtue, developing leadership, and providing academic support.

3) SCHOOL SPIRIT - The House system will provide a framework to accommodate friendly competition, encourage school spirit, and increase volunteer efforts.

House Names:

Augustine, Gregory, Jerome, Ambrose

The House patrons come from the four Saints on either side of St. Benedict in the mural at church. Each House has its own t-shirt with a symbol of their Saint and a quote from that Saint.

Activities:

Prayer Partners - Each student has been partnered up with a student in a different grade. Due to numbers, some students have two partners. We ask the students to pray for their prayer partner every day. We also try to foster those partnerships on our House Days by having partners sit together. In the JK and Kindergarten, their prayer partners are also their Mass buddies.

Mentoring - This year, we also want to add a mentoring aspect in the middle school. If a student is struggling academically or socially, I will work with their House prefect to see how we might be able to provide added support.

Patron Saint Day - Each House gets to wear their House shirt on the feast day for their patron Saint. Augustine and Gregory have passed, Jerome is coming up on Sept 30, and Ambrose is in December.

House Days - We have four House Days over the course of the school year. On those days, all students should wear their House t-shirt. We set aside the last hour and a half

of the day for House activities. That usually involves some time for prayer, House fellowship, then a competition between the Houses.

Service Projects - Each House is responsible for at least one service project per year. These are organized by the 8th grade students in that House. Typically they are for the middle school students, but we have tried to include the elementary kids (cards for residents).

Field Day - Our biggest House competition is Field Day at the end of the school year. Students should wear their House shirt, and they compete for their House. House points are awarded for each event.

House Cup:

Point System - points are awarded for a variety of activities, including: honor roll, virtue of the month, fewest demerits, fewest tardies, participation in sports, drama, choir, band, altar serving, clubs, service projects, and other school activities, PTO meeting attendance, spirit nights, field day, canned food drive, box tops, House Day competitions, etc. Points are normally awarded on a 4-3-2-1 scale. Our first points this year were awarded for attendance at the Centennial Opening Mass. At the end of the year, the House with the most points is awarded the House Cup, which is on display outside the school office. The name of that House is engraved on the base of the cup, and they receive some special privileges the following school year, such as decorating the House Cup, an extra t-shirt day and cookies that I'll make for them.

Catholic Trivia:

Last year the Catholic trivia that we did to end our House Days was very popular with the students, so Georgia asked if we could give the PTO a little taste of what that looked like. I have brought two of our House prefects, McKenzie (representing Jerome House) and Siobhan (representing Augustine House) to ask the questions for our trivia night. The rules are pretty simple. You need to divide up by House and each House should be seated at a different table. You may consult with everyone at the table, but there can only be one answer, and it must be written on the white board when answers are requested. They will read each question twice and give about 20 seconds to answer.