

August 18, 2020

#bethelight

*Loving God,
You sent your Son to bring light into the darkness of the world.
May we see everything in our lives in the light of our faith in Christ,
and accompany one another on our walk in the light.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.*

Peace and Greetings:

Welcome Home! Wow ... it's been over 170 days since many of us have been together. And since that time, we said goodbye to 121 graduates and will be welcoming over 100 new students onto our campus this fall. There are still a few weeks remaining before a new school year begins but I trust our students are actively engaged in their summer reading and reflecting upon this year's Summer Learning Experience (SLE) theme, **#bethelight**.

While the global pandemic continues to influence our daily lives, the general sentiment of our students, parents, faculty, and staff is one of anticipation for a return to the "normalcy" of studying and teaching on our campus. Based on the recent mandatory declaration survey, 91% of our students have chosen in-person learning and 9% will participate remotely starting this fall.

As we prepare to return to St. Paul, the renewed, albeit cautious, excitement of our entire school community must be met with reaffirmed diligence in caring for ourselves and each other in very practical ways. Ultimately, the sustainability and success of our transition back to school will depend on the attitude and mature behavior of every member of our St. Paul community, while in and out of school. Regardless of one's personal opinions or beliefs regarding COVID-19, everyone has a responsibility to understand and comply with the thoughtful health and safety expectations and protocols outlined in our Reopening Plan – Fall 2020. There is much information to digest. Please review and discuss these essential obligations as a family.

No doubt, it will be a challenging path and will require all of us to understand and respond to this critical calling to **#bethelight**.

TROPICAL STORM ISAIAS



Like everywhere else in Connecticut, Tropical Storm Isaias visited St. Paul on Tuesday, August 11 and knocked out electricity for four days causing some damage to our campus, dropping trees and numerous branches, shattering a baseball dugout, tearing banners, and leaving a hole in a rooftop skylight.

Despite this inconvenience, clean-up and extensive facility plans continue as we prepare our campus for the return of our faculty and students later this month.

WELCOME NEW FACULTY

We are pleased to welcome the following two English teachers to St. Paul.

Mr. Jeffrey Przech joins our faculty with twenty-two years of experience in Catholic education, including seventeen years at Northwest Catholic High School, West Hartford where he taught a variety of classes across all grades. Recently, Mr. Przech taught at Pathways Academy of Technology & Design, East Hartford. Mr. Przech received his BA degree in Writing & Rhetoric from Boston College and MA in Writing & Rhetoric from Trinity College.

Ms. Nicole Silva also comes highly recommended to teach in our English department. Ms. Silva graduated from the University of Saint Joseph with a BA degree in English and minor in Psychology. She received her MA degree from Southern New Hampshire University. For the last three years, she has taught at the Catholic Academy of Waterbury.

Our performing arts director, Mr. Mark Mazarella, will be expanding his creative gifts within the Unified Arts Department and has been hired as the full-time art instructor. We're certain he will bring the same passion and skill to the classroom as he does to the stage.

MAIN OFFICE HOURS

The Main Office will be open this week Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. We will resume normal weekday business hours from 7:00 am – 3:00 pm starting next Monday, August 24.

REOPENING PLAN – FALL 2020 UPDATE

St. Paul still plans to begin the 2020-2021 Academic Year in the In-Person Learning model. After the initial orientation and phase-in period, students will be expected to attend school in-person five days a week unless they have opted for the Remote/Distance Learning alternative, also five days a week.

There is some confusion with the Hybrid/Blended Learning model. This is not a declaration option for families but a model the school may choose and transition into throughout the year depending on internal or external conditions. In this case, students are divided into two cohorts by last name and attend school in-person twice a week and participate remotely twice a week. We would be notifying you that the school is transitioning into this model should that decision be made.

OPENING CALENDAR

As previously announced, in light of the extended student orientation/training anticipated in reopening for the new school year and to safely “phase in” our school community, the opening calendar is as follows:

Class of 2024 only	Monday, August 31 and Tuesday, September 1, 2020
Class of 2021 only	Wednesday, September 2, 2020
Class of 2022 only	Thursday, September 3, 2020
Class of 2023 only	Friday, September 4, 2020

Upon arrival, students should report directly to the auditorium where they will sit physically distanced apart.

Virtual orientation/information sessions will be held on Wednesday, September 2 or Thursday, September 3 at 3:00 pm for students opting for remote/distance learning to begin the school year. Students will receive a Zoom invitation and are required to attend one of the sessions. In addition, remote learning students will be required to participate online in appropriate orientation sessions with their class on the assigned day. Specific instructions/times will be communicated.

We will continue the “phase in” process and introduce our Hybrid/Blended Learning model with all students attending either in-person instruction or remote/distance learning classes with their designated cohort on Tuesday, September 8 and Wednesday, September 9. These days will help students to get used to the new class schedule, reinforce health and safety protocols, traffic flow for passing, etc. Full in-person instructional learning will begin on Thursday, September 10.

Labor Day – No School Monday, September 7, 2020

Tuesday, September 8, 2020 – Hybrid/Blended Learning model

- White Cohort (L-Z) In-school
- Blue Cohort (A-K) Remote

Wednesday, September 9, 2020 – Hybrid/Blended Learning model

- Blue Cohort (A-K) In-school
- White Cohort (L-Z) Remote

Thursday, September 10, 2020 – In-Person Learning model

- All declared In-Person Learning model students are expected at school
- All declared Remote/Distance Learning model students simultaneously attend classes online.

Upon arrival to school this week, students should report to their Homeroom/Period A classroom.

Students, faculty, staff and visitors arriving on our campus will have their temperature checked before entering the school and are required to wear a mask and hand sanitize upon entry to the building.

This year, school doors will open at 7:00 am. In the morning, students will only be allowed to enter school through the monitored main front door or rear center staircase. After 7:45 am, students who are tardy and all visitors, including parents, must enter through the front door.

The library will be open before school every weekday at 7:15 am and after school Monday through Thursday closing at 3:00 pm. A faculty monitored study is available in the dining hall after school Monday through Friday until 4:00 pm.

CLASS OF 2024 CONVOCATION

The New Student Convocation originally scheduled for Monday, August 31 at 7:00 pm has been cancelled due to CT's maximum assembly guidelines during COVID-19. Instead, the Class of 2024 Convocation, when students are formally inducted into the St. Paul community, will be held at the end of orientation on Tuesday, September 1 at 1:00 pm. The event will be live streamed and taped for families to watch. Students should wear dress attire to school on this day. Transfer students will sign their class book and receive a school gift during their orientation.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

A reminder that all student schedules were considered final as of July 31, 2020. Any changes initiated by students or parents now require a \$100 fee per schedule change, unless the change is recommended by the student's current teacher, guidance counselor and/or Dean of Academic Life. **Given the health and safety requirements during COVID-19, we will not approve course changes if they result in exceeding recommended class sizes.**

STUDENT ID CARDS

Art Rich Photography will be at St. Paul during the orientation for each class to take pictures for student ID cards. See the attached flyer if you are interested in purchasing a photo package.

TRANSPORTATION

Families that have registered for out-of-town bus transportation will receive their confirmed bus routes/regional stops next week. Bristol students should consult the Bristol Press or the Bristol Board of Education website at www.bristol.k12.ct.us for route information. If you have any questions regarding transportation, please contact Elizabeth Gunn, egunn@spchs.com, in our finance office.

FOOD SERVICE

As we start the school year, there will be limited breakfast options available beginning at 7:00 am. Similarly, the lunch menu will have "Grab & Go" selections (sandwiches, salads, soups) available from 10:30 am – noon.

HEALTH ROOM

Your Health Room Emergency Information Card (yellow form) and pre-filled SPCHS Information Form (Emergency Parent Reach), originally distributed in the June parent mailing are due. It is imperative that this information be updated annually and returned before school starts. See attached for additional blank forms.

This is a reminder that according to Connecticut state law, as a requirement for entrance to Grade 11, students are required to have a physical examination in either Grade 9 or 10. In addition, a student who is attending a school in the State of Connecticut for the first time (regardless of the grade) is required to have a health assessment/physical examination. Students who wish to participate in sports must have a sports physical done yearly. This year due to COVID-19, the validity date has been extended from 13 to 15 months.

DAILY HEATH CHECK

A reminder that the online Daily Heath Check survey must be completed by all students, faculty and staff prior to arriving at school. The access link will be sent to you soon. All responses will be received by the health room and are confidential. If a student or faculty/staff member answers YES to any of the following questions they must stay home from school and follow the recommended protocol.

A copy of the survey instrument provided by the Bristol-Burlington Health District (BBHD) follows:

When a student or faculty member must stay home from school

Does your child have any one or more of the following symptoms?

- ☐ A fever (an elevated body temperature) of 100 degrees F. or above
- ☐ Any sign/symptom of respiratory distress *
- ☐ Have a persistent cough *
- ☐ Have a loss of taste and/or smell *
- ☐ Does your child have symptoms not listed above? *
- ☐ Does your child have an illness or injury? *
- ☐ Was you child diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days? **
- ☐ Is/Was your child a close contact of a COVID-19 positive individual within the last 14 days? **
- ☐ Did your child spend at least 24 hours in a state listed on CT's COVID-19 Travel Advisory within the last 14 days? **

*** To protect the health of your child and the entire school population, a signed note from a CT Licensed Physician, APRN, Physician Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner, identifying they have assessed your child, the date of assessment, and that they have cleared your child to return to school, must be received by the school nurse prior to your child returning to school.**

**** For COVID-19 specific criteria, the School Nurse or the Public Health Authority will approve your child's return to school.**

STUDENT HANDBOOK

You are expected to read and discuss with your child the updated Student Handbook, located on our website (available Friday, August 21) before printing, signing and returning the Agreement for Students and Parents (found under the Student Life tab) by September 8.

Particular attention should be given to the section on **Student Dress Code**. Students are advised that they represent St. Paul at all times, both in their school uniform and alternative dress attire.

Reference is also made to the section on **Discipline Policy**. It should be reiterated that St. Paul has no tolerance for student involvement with illegal drugs or alcohol on our campus or at school related functions.

Also, please speak with your child regarding the harmful behavior of vaping, especially with the respiratory threat of coronavirus. Lastly, not respecting the dignity of each student undermines the Christian atmosphere of our school and deprives students of a safe and nurturing learning environment. This includes the increasingly complicated world of social media and cyber bullying. **Please be preventative and emphasize the serious consequences of these behaviors with your child.**

STUDENT PARKING

Parking a car at St. Paul is a privilege extended to students, not a right. Students who have obtained their license and will be driving to school are reminded that they must annually register their vehicle (receive a valid parking sticker) with Al Wallace, Dean of Student Life. This year, cognizant of COVID-19, we have reduced the parking registration fee to \$25.00/semester or \$50.00/year. This fee is payable at the time of vehicle registration. Students not obeying the Connecticut Driver's License Restrictions for a 16 and 17-year old (i.e. transporting other students) or driving irresponsibly in our parking lot will lose their parking privileges.

ATHLETICS

As previously announced, the scheduled start of fall sports, specifically football conditioning on Monday, August 17th has been postponed. The CIAC and CT Department of Public Health will be in conversation this week to finalize CT's High School fall sports plan. We will continue to keep you informed of the details and the schedule for fall sports as we receive it.

A reminder for student athletes and their families to register and fill out all of the necessary paper work on the school website if you plan to participate in a fall sport. It is important that all of your paper work is complete along with an up to date physical so we can be prepared for our fall teams to hit the ground running with their conditioning sessions and practices once the final determination is made.

See the following link for the statement from the CIAC regarding fall sports.

<https://ciacsports.com/site/?p=14688>

PERFORMING ARTS

St. Paul Performing Arts is pleased to announce our 2020 Fall production entitled, *Heart to Heart: An Evening of Scenes and Monologues*. The collection of monologues ranges from classics to original works from a variety of students from freshmen to seniors. The monologues and scenes are designed for a large and diverse cast and will provide an exciting assortment of dramatic experiences in a single evening.



Audition information will be posted in September. Students will be asked to submit a one-minute video performing a short monologue of their choice. Rehearsals will be directly after school limited to a small number of students at a time, online at designated times or a combination of both. More information will follow.

CONGRATULATIONS! ST. PAUL DATA ANALYTICS TEAM ONE OF NINE HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS RECOGNIZED WORLDWIDE

It was recently announced that the St. Paul Catholic High School Data Analytics Team has been named a winner in the Microsoft “AI for Good” Imagine Cup Junior 2020 Competition. St. Paul Data Analytics was one of nine teams from schools worldwide selected as 2020 winners, with three teams named from the Americas, three from Asia, and three from EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Asia).

Imagine Cup Junior 2020 provided an opportunity for students to learn about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and develop innovative solutions to major global challenges. Students were asked to select an issue facing the world, conduct research, articulate their concept using AI, and showcase their understanding of the ethical and responsible use of AI in their project proposal.

The St. Paul team developed and submitted “ABBY”, a smart watch app to support young people with autism by identifying and reducing their anxiety while supporting their communication and social skills. ABBY was judged to creatively apply AI, Machine Learning, and biometrics to support students with autism based on strong project research, conceptual designs, and ethical considerations. ABBY received Microsoft recognition as a proposal addressing accessibility.

 		
Team 7 <i>Raffles Institution</i> <i>Singapore</i>	Laughter Catcher <i>St. Paul's Convent School for Girls</i> <i>Hong Kong</i>	Team Impact Vivarta <i>Daffodils English School</i> <i>India</i>
Wanderguardian <i>Westview High School</i> <i>United States</i>	ABBY <i>St. Paul Catholic High School</i> <i>United States</i>	Aegis Emote <i>James E. Taylor High School</i> <i>United States</i>
Retromate <i>Queen Elizabeth's School for Boys</i> <i>United Kingdom</i>	Lung Pal <i>GEMS Wellington Academy</i> <i>United Arab Emirates</i>	Memoria AI <i>International School of Lausanne</i> <i>Switzerland</i>

The ABBY project was one of several initiatives by SPCHS Data Analytics Team members this year. ABBY was led by senior Alecia Barbieri and sophomore Lila Alderete with mathematics teacher Mary Clarke serving as the team advisor. Ms. Clarke stated, “I am proud of the accomplishments of our SPCHS Data Analytics Team this year. I am particularly excited by how Alecia and Lila creatively combined leading-edge technologies such as AI, Machine Learning, biometric sensors, and data science in an offering to assist students with autism.”

SPCHS offers computer science and statistics course options that are combined with other disciplines to help prepare students for further studies and careers in our increasingly digital economy. Mrs. Clarke further stated, “I join the entire SPCHS community in congratulating our students for their Microsoft recognition. We are inspired by their passion to address societal challenges such as autism and to help build a better world. We are also honored that global technology leader Microsoft has recognized St Paul Catholic High and our Data Team from a strong pool of competing schools.”

In 2019-2020 the SPCHS Data Analytics team members participated in the following:

- American Statistical Association - Data Visualization Poster Competition
- 2019 MTFC – Modeling the Future Competition by Actuarial Foundation
- Desmos – Global Math Art Contest
- The Perry Outreach Initiative Program – Women in STEM & Medicine
- 18th Annual Travelers Actuary and Analytics High School Day
- MIT COVID Challenge – International COVID Solutions Team
- Microsoft Imagine Junior Cup 2020 – AI For Good Competition
- MIT 100K Competition & Harvard iLab Competition Viewing Party

2019-2020 SPCHS Data Analytics Team Participants:

Lila Alderete, Ethan Allen, Alecia Barbieri, Colin Ivers, Christopher Millerick, Richard Scott, Frank Wankerl, and Kevin Zixuan Sun. Advisor: Mary Clarke

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

St. Paul provides **voluntary student accident insurance** through Bollinger Specialty Group. If interested, enrollment may be completed online at www.BollingerSchools.com or download an application on our website and mail it directly to Bollinger.

FINAL WORD

To keep our St. Paul community fully informed during these ever-changing times, I plan to email you every Sunday evening moving forward. Please be on the lookout for this news.

Despite COVID-19, as a new school year approaches, excitement and enthusiasm builds for that first day of school when renewed promises and dreams begin anew. It will undoubtedly be different and challenging but also presents a unique opportunity for each of us to stretch ourselves to reach our heightened potential. May God continue to guide all of us at St. Paul on our journey *to be a truly great Catholic high school*.

As always, don't hesitate to contact me/us if you have any questions or concerns. ***Thank you*** for choosing St. Paul as your educational partner. More than ever, I ask for your continued prayers for all of us dedicated to the mission of this learning community. Be assured that you and your family are remembered daily in ours.

St. Paul, pray for us,

Cary M. Dupont '72
President/Chief Administrator