

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of February 4

All School

We're Fighting the Flu!

The flu is rampant in our city, and we are working hard to safeguard our students in every way we can. Our full-time faculty, part-time Explore and Extend teachers, staff, and custodial crew always clean and sanitize throughout the day, and we also have hired crews doing additional deep cleanings at night to help keep contagion to a minimum.

Since the flu virus is spread through respiratory secretions, we are giving our students extra reminders to cover their noses and mouths when coughing or sneezing, to dispose of used tissues immediately, and to wash their hands frequently and thoroughly. Please continue to remind your children of these behaviors at home, as well.

Working together, we will make it through this challenging time!

Please Take Our One-Minute Uniform Survey!

As you know, Parker School Uniforms shuttered its business early last month—and we need your help to choose a replacement uniform provider!

Please [click here to take our three-question survey](#). It will only take a minute, and your input will be invaluable to us as we make this decision.

Thank you!

Woolrich Luncheon Is This Thursday

Please join our luncheon chair, Jessica Brazelton, to hear extraordinary accounts from our 2016–17 Woolrich award recipients: Middle School faculty **Carol Bedard and Morrie Bogrand**, Lower School Math Faculty **Amanda Heidemann**, Technology/Mathematics Specialist **Holly Plost**, and Lower School Spanish Faculty **Maria Capecchi and Mercedes Perli**. These educators will share their experiences from this past summer, which were made possible by the Woolrich Fund for Faculty.

All Main Campus faculty members will be parking off-site this day, so please feel free to park in any open spot not designated as reserved. There will also be complimentary valet parking available at the front entrance of the school.

Thanks to the generosity of St. Francis community members who have donated to the Woolrich Fund, life-changing trips and training have served to spark the imagination of our world-class faculty. To learn more about this unique fund or to donate, please [visit the St. Francis website](#).

PA Spring Luncheon Is April 4

This year's St. Francis Parents Association Spring Luncheon will be held at the Houston Country Club on Wednesday, April 4. You won't want to miss Shasta Nelson, M.Div! The relationship expert and author of *Frientimacy: How to Deepen Friendships for Lifelong Health and Happiness* and *Friendships Don't Just Happen! The Guide to Creating a Meaningful Circle of GirlFriends* will be speaking to us about how to have and be meaningful friends—and how to teach our children to do the same!

Invitation and registration information to follow.

Save the Date: Festival Fiesta 2018 Is April 15

Don't miss out on an opportunity to celebrate with us—Festival Fiesta 2018 is on its way!

- **St. Francis Festival Day is set for Sunday, April 15.**
- **Festival Fiesta 2018 packets have been mailed.** Be on the lookout for a large white envelope.
- **Online registration and payment** is now open. [Click here](#) to get started.

- **The underwriter deadline is Friday, March 2, with all other forms due by Friday, March 23.** Please note the earlier deadlines.
- Each spring since 1969, the St. Francis Episcopal Church and School community has joined together to organize and celebrate Festival Day. This family event features games, food, and fellowship. Proceeds benefit the One Community Fund, which underwrites security enhancements, support staff expenses, and landscape and infrastructure improvements for both church and school.

Check your mailbox so you don't miss out on all the fun to be had at Festival Fiesta 2018!

If you have questions or did not receive your packet, please contact event chairs [Megan Tipton](#) and [Marjorie Dale](#).

Summer Camp Registration Opens Tomorrow

Make a Move toward summer! Registration for Summer on the Point 2018 opens tomorrow (Monday, February 5). SOTP offers students entering Primary I through Upper School grades camps in discovery, enrichment, arts, sports, STEAM, technology, and academic review.

- Sessions for **June 4–29** and **July 16–August 10** are packed with learning, discovery, and fun!
- For course descriptions, [visit our summer programs page](#).
- To register, please [sign in to your My BackPack account](#) and select "Program Registration."

Get the Scoop at the PA General Meeting on February 6

The Parents Association General Meeting will take place **Tuesday, February 6, at 8:15 a.m.** Join us in the **Special Events Room** (located in the former Pre-Primary Building) on the Main Campus.

Open to all parents, this meeting is an opportunity to hear reports from PA committee chairs and to participate in a discussion of matters as they pertain to PA business.

Come Connect at a Division Coffee

Want to hear more about what's happening in your child's division? Have

questions or ideas for the division head or head of school? Want to connect with other parents who have children around the same age?

Come to a division coffee!

We'll be hosting them according to the following schedule:

- **Primary School:** Wednesday, February 21, at 10:00 a.m., immediately following chapel (in the Primary School Library)
- **Lower School:** Wednesday, February 14, at 9:00 a.m., immediately following chapel (in the Chapel Narthex)
- **Middle School:** Wednesday, February 28, at 2:30 p.m., after the Choices parent meeting (in the Main Campus Library)

Can't wait to see you there!

Primary School

From the Division Head: Podcasts for Kids

I often encourage listening to podcasts as a way for adults to learn more about child development, parenting, popular culture, and current research in areas of interest that seem to get neglected in our overscheduled lives.

Strengthening listening skills is an important part of language development for children. Concentrating on what they hear, without visual cues, builds creativity as they generate an image of the characters and setting of a story. They focus on what is being said, the rhythm of the language, rich vocabulary, the voices, and the conflict and resolution in the story.

I love quality children's books and think that well-illustrated books are one of the most valuable components in developing strong readers. But, sometimes, just listening has its benefits.

Podcasts are great for car trips, your commute home, or quiet times when you want to reduce stimulation. Some recommended podcasts (search on your podcast app) for children and families are suggested below.

Story Pirates

Stories are written by children, for children, and read by talented storytellers accompanied by engaging music.

Ear Snacks

“A podcast for kids about the world” covering music, science, art, and culture in a “fun-filled, family-friendly podcast” for parents and kids. Narrators Andrew and Polly host this science-oriented show with episodes like the recent one called “Toenails!” Did you know that the annual rate of growth for toenails is the same as the annual movement of the San Andreas Fault (two inches per year)? Guest scientists talk about what happens when an earthquake occurs.

Storynory

Fairy tales, myths, and original stories are told by engaging storytellers. Great listening for bedtime or other times of the day when you want to promote a quiet, calm, and peaceful atmosphere.

But Why

“Why do leaves change colors in the fall”?

“Who invented words”?

“Why is the sky blue”?

In this biweekly podcast featuring answers to questions submitted by children, narrators examine the science behind children’s curiosity.

Enjoy!

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

Please Take Our One-Minute Uniform Survey!

As you know, Parker School Uniforms shuttered its business early last month—and we need your help to choose a replacement uniform provider!

Please [click here to take our three-question survey](#). It will only take a minute, and your input will be invaluable to us as we make this decision.

Thank you!

Friendly Reminder Regarding Valentine's Day Treats

The following information is located on page 53 of the *School Handbook*, which can be found in the Parent Portal:

Goodie Bag and Treat Policy

Primary School students may not give gifts, goodie bags, or treats for any occasion. Students may have food allergies, and gifts of candy and cookies could pose a serious health hazard. In addition, small toys and trinkets in goodie bags can easily become a choking risk. Therefore, goodie bags and gifts—as well as cupcakes, cookies, and other treats—are not allowed. For Valentine's Day parties, cards without candy are preferred; however, if a card has candy attached, the candy will not be consumed at school and will be sent home.

Primary School Dining Hall Menu

To view the Primary School Dining Hall menu for February, please click [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, February 5

- *Registration Opens for Summer on the Point*
-

Tuesday, February 6

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, February 7

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms*
-

Tuesday, February 13

- *Shrove Tuesday*

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
 - *T/Th Pre-Primary Students Celebrate Valentine's Day: Students only*
-

Wednesday, February 14

- *Ash Wednesday*
 - *Valentine's Day*
 - *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms*
 - *MWF Pre-Primary, Primary I, and Primary II Students Celebrate Valentine's Day: Students only*
-

Thursday, February 15

- *Primary II Winter Field Trip: Students only*
-

Monday, February 19

- ***Inclement Weather Makeup Day:*** We will follow our regular school schedule today
-

Tuesday, February 20

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.*
-

Wednesday, February 21

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms*
 - *Primary School Parent Coffee: 10:00 a.m. in the Primary School Library*
-

Thursday, February 22

- *T/Th Pre-Primary Rodeo Day: Students only*
-

Friday, February 23

- *Darla McNay Rodeo Day: Students only. Children are encouraged to wear western wear; please leave guns, spurs, and stick horses at home. Also bring tennis shoes for PE and/or recess if wearing boots. Yee-haw!*

Lower School

From the Division Head

Our teachers have been getting ready for conferences and are very excited to meet with you on Wednesday regarding your child's progress! If your child is in second, third, or fourth grade, he or she will attend the first few minutes of the conference. The teachers have explained what the students' role is to them, and your children are ready to share their reflections!

In recognition of Valentine's Day, Lower School began our Heart-to-Heart chain this past Thursday. Students will be able to "earn" hearts in a variety of ways to give away to others in Lower School. When a student earns a heart, they will put the name of the recipient on the heart (decorating optional) and deliver it to their friend's class. All students and teachers can participate in this activity.

Teachers are hanging the hearts on the walls outside the pods. The goal is to make a heart chain, connecting our hearts throughout the Lower School, symbolizing that love connects us all in our St. Francis Community.

Speaking of Valentine's Day, the children will be celebrating in their classrooms on Wednesday, February 14. Your teachers will be sending grade-specific information regarding what the children may bring for this special day. **The school provides all treats.**

Please be aware of our policy on treats, as stated in our *School Handbook*:

"Students may not give gifts, goodie bags, or treats for any occasion, including birthdays, Christmas, or other celebrations. Students may have food allergies, and gifts of candy and cookies could pose a serious health hazard. Therefore, goodie bags and gifts—as well as cupcakes, cookies, and other treats—are

not allowed. For Valentine's Day parties, cards without candy are preferred; however, if a card has candy attached, the candy will not be consumed at school and will be sent home."

We are continuing to extend our students' vocabulary knowledge. **Our division-wide words for February are "organize" and "formulate."** Make sure to ask your child about the words and how they are incorporating them across the curriculum!

As a faculty, we continue learning together every Tuesday afternoon. We have had training sessions led by teachers themselves on various forms of technology, and this past week we continued our focus on effective teacher language. There is a great deal of neuro research in the field of parent and teacher communication, so this is an area we revisit often.

Stop in anytime to visit. I am looking forward to a wonderful week!

Warmly,

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

Please Take Our One-Minute Uniform Survey!

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Please [click here to take our three-question survey](#). It will only take a minute, and your input will be invaluable to us as we make this decision.

Thank you!

Explore and Extend Available Wednesday During Conferences

Wednesday, February 7, is Parent/Teacher Conference Day for Lower and Middle School and a holiday for students in those divisions. **Childcare is available on the Main Campus from 7:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m.** on this day, through Explore and Extend. To make reservations, [e-mail us](#) or call 713.458.6467.

Send Us Your World Series Memories by February 15

If you have photos of your SFE kids at the World Series or the parade, please e-mail them to [Steve Johnson](#) by **Thursday, February 15**. We may be able to include them in our Wolves at The World Series page in the yearbook!

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, February 5

- *Dress Uniform Day*
 - *Registration Opens for Summer on the Point*
 - *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between February 4-10 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
-

Wednesday, February 7

- *Holiday for Lower and Middle School Students*
 - *Parent-Teacher Conferences:* Please remember to choose a conference time with your homeroom teacher using the SignUpGenius links sent in the e-mail; second-, third-, and fourth-grade students will join parents in their confereces
-

Monday, February 12

- *Dress Uniform Day*
 - *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between February 11-17 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
-

Wednesday, February 14

- *Dress Uniform Day:* In honor of Ash Wednesday Chapel (not a Eucharist)

- *Lower School Parent Coffee:* 9:00 a.m. in the Chapel Narthex
 - *Valentine's Day Parties:* Please see important information above in the letter from the division head
-

Monday, February 19

- ***Inclement Weather Makeup Day:*** We will follow our regular school schedule today
 - *Dress Uniform Day*
 - *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between February 18-24 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
-

Wednesday, February 21

- *Regular Uniform Day:*
 - *Chapel:* 8:05 a.m. in the Fine Arts Center (FAC)
-

Friday, February 23

- *Go Texan Day:* Children are encouraged to wear western wear; please leave guns, spurs, and stick horses at home. Also bring tennis shoes for PE and/or recess if wearing boots. Yee-haw!

Middle School

From the Division Head

Happy Sunday, Middle School Families. I hope you all are having a wonderful weekend.

Our February virtue is kindness, which plays a strong role in our happiness. According to the recent *New York Times* article linked [here](#), Yale University Professor Dr. Laurie Santos is currently teaching “Psychology 157: Psychology and the Good Life,” which her students call “Happiness Class.” With one in four students at Yale taking the course, it is the most popular

class offering in the history of the university, and there is obviously a high demand to learn how to be happy.

Dr. Santos emphasizes teaching gratitude, proactivity, and social connectedness to enhance happiness. Students embark on mini-projects to put these skills into action and track their progress in their daily lives. Dr. Santos says that she must change her students' mindset from the formula for a happy life embedded in most people, which is "good grades + good internship + high-paying job = happiness," which research says isn't true at all.

The good news is that we are teaching gratitude, proactivity, and social connectedness right here at St. Francis. Our Advisory program reinforces these virtues and life skills each week, as do our academic classes, and our heavy emphasis on connecting with others in order to positively serve them manifests itself daily on our campus. Our outstanding faculty and staff put kindness into practice on a daily basis, and we see our students do the same. As the ancient Greek author Aesop once said, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

In school life, February can be a busy and challenging month, so I challenge our students, families, faculty, and staff to strengthen our connectedness through kindness: It will make us all happier.

It's a beautiful day, and we are Wolves!

Connor Cook, EdD
Head of Middle School

Eighth-Grade White Shirt Day

Eighth-grade students will take the annual White Shirt Day photo between 8:00–10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 27. Please make every effort to have students to school on time that day, and please avoid early dismissals during this two-hour window. Attire for the photo is blue jeans and a button-down, long-sleeve white shirt.

Handbook Policy on Treats and Gifts

With Valentine's Day around the corner, please remember that treats and gifts are not allowed. Below you'll find an excerpt from the *School Handbook* covering this policy:

Students may not give gifts, goodie bags, or treats for any occasion, including birthdays, Christmas, or other celebrations. Students may have food allergies, and gifts of candy and cookies could pose a serious health hazard. Therefore, goodie bags and gifts—as well as cupcakes, cookies, and other treats—are not allowed.

Guidelines for This Friday’s Winter Dance

The Middle School Winter Dance for grades six, seven, and eight is this **Friday, February 9**, in the gym.

Dance guidelines in the *School Handbook* contain the following information:

- Please don't drop off your child earlier than 7:30 p.m.
- Students are allowed to use their cell phones only to contact parents for transportation changes. Cell phone use during the dance for other purposes is prohibited.
- The theme is “Mardi Gras.” Students may dress according to theme as long as it is school-appropriate.
- Please review the dress-code guidelines for dances on pages 94–95 of the [School Handbook](#).

Sock Drive at Winter Dance

As we focus on kindness during the month of February, the Middle School CARES council is sponsoring a **sock drive at the Winter Dance**. We ask that you **bring a pair—or pairs—of new athletic or dress socks in any size**, along with your \$10 dance admission fee. Collected items will be donated to the Lord of the Schools.

To get everyone in the spirit, **this Friday will be Crazy Sock Day**, along with our normal Friday dress, so let’s get creative and rock your socks!

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Mark Your Calendar

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- *Regular Schedule/Dress Uniform Day*
 - *Registration Opens for Summer on the Point*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
 - *Q3 Progress Reports Online*
-

Tuesday, February 6

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Spring Athletics Season Begins*
-

Wednesday, February 7

- *Student Holiday*
- *Welcome to the Den Conferences: 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. in advisor classrooms*

- *Howlers Pictures: 1:00-2:00 p.m. in the gym*
-

Thursday, February 8

- ***Tuesday Schedule/Regular Uniform Day***
 - *Fifth Grade Has PE*
 - *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
-

Friday, February 9

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Friday Uniform With Crazy Socks*
- *Seventh-Grade AALC Field Trip to Museum of Fine Arts: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.*
- *Fifth-Grade Game Night: 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center (FAC)*
- *Middle School Winter Dance: For students in grades 6-8; 7:30-10:00 p.m. in the gym; "Mardi Gras" theme*

Church

Register for SFSA Volleyball Today

Registration for the St. Francis Sports Association volleyball season is open for fourth- and fifth-grade girls! If you have any questions, please [e-mail us](#).

Shrove Tuesday Party Is February 13

Our Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and Mardi Gras Party is scheduled from **5:00-7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13**—the evening before Ash Wednesday.

Join us for some family fun as we feast on pancakes, sausage, red beans and rice, and gumbo. There will also be crafts for the kids and Zydeco music provided by Rick Keith & friends.

For further details and to RSVP, [click here](#).