

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of April 8

All School

Feast Your Eyes: Our 2016–17 Annual Report Is Online

We're proud of the bold way we approach life at St. Francis Episcopal School—and it shows! [Check out our latest annual report](#) for a sampling of highlights and special memories from the 2016–17 school year.

'Lost Boy of Sudan' to Speak at St. Francis on April 26 and 27

When Salva Dut left his war-torn home with the other “Lost Boys of Sudan” in 1985, he faced an incredible journey of pain, peril ... and promise. Join St. Francis on **Thursday, April 26**, as we welcome Mr. Dut, who will speak about his *lost* years and how he *found* himself through his nonprofit, Water for South Sudan, which today provides lifesaving water wells to the remote villages of his homeland.

A VIP Reception with Mr. Dut will kick off at 6:00 p.m. in the Crum Library. Doors to the Fine Arts Center will then open at 7:00 p.m. for Mr. Dut's talk, which will begin at 7:15 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for the VIP Reception and \$10 for general admission, and are [available only by online purchase here](#).

Linda Sue Park's *New York Times* best seller *A Long Walk to Water*, which recounts Mr. Dut's story of survival, will be available for sale. *All proceeds will benefit Water for South Sudan.*

Mr. Dut will return to St. Francis the morning of Friday, April 27, to speak to our Middle Schoolers and visiting students from area schools.

How Would You Change the Mini-Directory? (3-Minute Survey)

How useful are the online and printed directories the Parents Association provides? The PA wants your feedback! Please help make next year's parent directory as helpful as possible by taking 3 minutes to complete [this survey](#)—and let them know what information should stay in the directory, what can go, and what info you'd like to see added.

Magnus Health Forms Due June 1

Completed Magnus Health forms for the 2018-19 school year are due by **Friday, June 1**. The forms are available in the Magnus Health Information section of the Parent Portal.

Parent Community Bible Studies

Please join us for upcoming Bible studies aimed at our parent community:

MOMS' PRAYER DEVOTIONAL WITH MRS. HEINEMANN

Monday, April 9, at 8:40 a.m. in the Chapel of St. Clare

This is a peaceful time of scriptural reflection, prayerful meditation, and supportive fellowship.

All moms are welcome!

DADS' BIBLE STUDY WITH FATHER WISMER

Thursday, April 12, at 7:15 a.m. in the Christian Education Rooms (at the end of the Middle School hallway)

This study explores faithful obedience in the Gospels and helps us uncover and develop practices of faithful obedience.

All dads are welcome!

Primary School

From the Division Head

As a parent, you have surely read your share of articles and books filled with advice and guidance on how to support your child in his or her educational journey. Although I have been an educator for 38 years, I still come across a word or term occasionally that leads me to a website search on Google, or to Dictionary.com for a definition.

While I understand the need for some of these terms, I try to guide those I work with to use them sparingly in their writing and conversations, unless they are accompanied by an explanation. **In the spirit of demystifying this educational jargon, sometimes referred to as “edu-speak,” I thought it might be useful to explain what some of these commonly used terms mean.** With a popular focus on skills that will be needed in future careers, many of these terms also apply to the business world.

Soft Skills: Personal characteristics that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people are highly valued skills. These include competence in time management, organization, self-confidence, resilience, problem-solving, flexibility, effective communication, teamwork, and other interpersonal skills.

Executive Functioning Skills: The processes that enable us to plan, focus, organize, prioritize, remember instructions, get started, and accomplish tasks.

Self-regulation: The ability to focus attention, control emotions, and manage behaviors and feelings.

Multiple Intelligences: A theory that proposes eight different types of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. This theory, known as the Multiple Intelligences Theory, was proposed by Howard Gardner. It supports the belief that we can be “smart” in many different ways.

Differentiated Instruction: A method used to reach students with different learning styles. Each student learns best in his or her own way, and differentiated instruction means that the teacher designs instruction that will suit each individual student.

Working Memory: The ability to store and manage information in one's mind for a short period of time. This type of memory is important in knowing the steps necessary to solve a math problem, the rules of a game, and multistep directions.

Higher-Order Thinking/Critical Thinking Skills: A sought-after skill set that does not depend on rote learning or memorization of facts. It is the ability to take in information, analyze data, test hypotheses, compare findings, draw conclusions, answer questions, and solve problems that may have more than one right answer.

Emergent Curriculum: An approach to curriculum that focuses on teachers being attuned to students' interests and creating opportunities for learning. Collaboration, active learning experiences, and flexibility are evident in this approach.

Project-Based Learning/Project-Approach Learning: A project is the in-depth identification and study of a real-world problem. The process, journey, and discovery that students engage in while completing the project are valued rather than the solution or conclusion. Projects develop from students' interests and ideas, and are supported by the teacher, who is also a researcher in the process.

Growth Mindset: A term developed by Carol Dweck, "growth mindset" refers to the idea that basic abilities and brain functions can be improved with dedication and perseverance. Learners with a growth mindset see challenges as opportunities for problem-solving and progress. Someone who is not motivated to continue to grow, or who believes that talent is fixed and unchangeable, is said to have a "fixed mindset."

Social-Emotional Learning: This framework is designed to cultivate qualities like empathy, emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making.

Whole-Child Learning: Educating the "whole child" means that a program recognizes and values all aspects of a child's development: cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual. Attention is given to planning experiences that support children in every domain of development.

In our work with families, our goal is to communicate effectively for the benefit of your child. We want each child to achieve his or her personal best, and we appreciate the opportunity to be a part of your child's growth at St. Francis.

All the best,

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

School Starts Late on Monday, April 16 (No Early Birds!)

We have a late start on Monday, April 16. NO EARLY BIRDS TODAY! **Carpool begins at 8:30 a.m. and school starts at 9:00 a.m.**

Sign Up Now: Spring Conferences Are April 26

Please sign up for spring conferences by clicking on the name of your child's teacher:

PRE-PRIMARY

- [Ferguson](#)
- [Meriwether](#)
- [Oteiza](#)
- [Robinson](#)

PRIMARY I

- [Bruckner](#)
- [Capasso](#)
- [Hughes](#)
- [Porter](#)
- [Scriber](#)

PRIMARY II

- [Blades](#)
- [Brooks](#)
- [Prasifka](#)
- [Staller](#)
- [Wiener](#)

Primary School Dining Hall Menu

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

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 9

- *Primary II Motor Celebration:* Primary II parents, please join us in the Motor Room according to the following schedule:
 - 11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Blades)
 - 12:00-12:30 p.m. (Wiener)
 - 12:30-1:00 p.m. (Prasifka)
 - 1:00-1:30 p.m. (Staller)
 - 1:30-2:00 p.m. (Brooks)

Tuesday, April 10

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

Wednesday, April 11

- *Primary I Fathers and Friends Breakfast:* 8:15 a.m.
 - *Chapel:* 9:30 a.m.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms
-

Thursday, April 12

- *T/Th Pre-Primary Pep Rally:* Students only
-

Friday, April 13

- *Primary School Pep Rally:* Students only
-

Sunday, April 15

- *Festival Fiesta:* Noon to 4:00 p.m. on the Main Campus
-

Monday, April 16

- *School Starts at 9:00 a.m.: **NO EARLY BIRDS TODAY!*** Carpool begins at 8:30 a.m.
-

Tuesday, April 17

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

Wednesday, April 18

- *Chapel:* 9:30 a.m.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms
- *Primary II Play Performances:*
 - Group A: 12:00 p.m. in the Drama Room
 - Group B: 1:15 p.m. in the Drama Room

Lower School

From the Division Head

I hope everyone had a relaxing weekend!

We had a wonderful meeting on the South Campus for our Primary II parents. “Looking Forward: Life in Lower School” was the topic, as we want to get our new parents plugged in quickly! From school administrators and kindergarten teachers to instructional specialists and Parents Association representatives, presenters from all areas shared their roles and offered ways to get involved. We realize that moving to an entirely new campus is a big shift! I know you all will join us in welcoming our new friends to the Main Campus next school year!

As you know, we are a growth mindset–focused school, and we are constantly looking for ways to promote growth mindsets in everyone on campus, from students to faculty.

In her letter to Primary School parents, above, Head of Primary School Amy Whitley offers the following excellent definition of “growth mindset”:

“A term developed by Carol Dweck, ‘growth mindset’ refers to the idea that basic abilities and brain functions can be improved with dedication and perseverance. Learners with a growth mindset see challenges as opportunities for problem-solving and progress. Someone who is not motivated to continue to grow, or who believes that talent is fixed and unchangeable, is said to have a ‘fixed mindset.’”

I have written before about the importance of the language we use with children, especially praise. I wanted to revisit this important topic, as the type of praise we give our children has incredible potential to promote a fixed or a growth mindset, which can be set for life.

Click [here](#) to watch a short video on the topic, and [here](#) for a parent's cheat sheet on praising your kiddos.

Know that we are committed to working in the classroom to utilize best practices in teacher language. We love collaborating with you on this journey!

Have a fabulous week!

Cheers,

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

School Starts Later on Monday, April 16

We have late arrival on Monday, April 16. **Students will begin the school day at 9:00 a.m.**

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 9

- *Dress Uniform Day*
- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between April 8-14 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today

Friday, April 13

- *Festival Spirit Day:* Students may wear their Festival T-shirts with jeans or uniform bottoms

Sunday, April 15

- *Festival Fiesta:* Noon to 4:00 p.m. on the Main Campus

Monday, April 16

- *Regular Uniform Day:* No Chapel today
 - *Late Arrival:* Students will begin the school day at 9:00 a.m.
-

Tuesday, April 17

- *Fourth-Grade Declamation and Incoming Fifth-Grade Preview:* Wheatcroft Parish Hall and fifth-grade classrooms; please see e-mailed invitation for details
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Wednesday, April 18

- *FAC Chapel:* 8:05 a.m.
 - *Third-Grade Declamation and Incoming Fourth-Grade Preview:* Wheatcroft Parish Hall and fourth-grade classrooms; please see e-mailed invitation for details
-

Thursday, April 19

- *Second-Grade Declamation and Incoming Third-Grade Preview:* Second-grade classrooms and third-grade pod; please see e-mailed invitation for details
-

Friday, April 20

- *First-Grade Declamation and Incoming Second-Grade Preview:* Please see e-mailed invitation for details on locations and times

Monday, April 23

- *Dress Uniform Day*
- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between April 15-28 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
- *Kindergarten Declamation and Incoming First-Grade Preview:* Please see e-mailed invitation for details on locations and times

Friday, April 27

- *Thyme for a Rhyme Spring Concert:* Featuring Joyful Sounds Choir and introducing PULSE Instrument Ensemble; 8:05 a.m. in the Fine Arts Center; parents of performing choir and ensemble are welcome

Middle School

From the Division Head

Happy Sunday, Middle School Families. I hope this finds you all well today.

I'm keeping it short this week. On the Mind, Brain, and Education Science front, please see [this](#) website about the science of learning, brought to you by two cognitive psychology scientists. I encourage you to further explore this informative resource, as well. (Most recently, they featured [this](#) interesting article about note-taking.)

Please broach the topics of note-taking and study skills with your students, especially as we get closer to final assessments. Our faculty and staff continue to employ best practices informed by Mind, Brain, and Education Science research, so please feel free to engage them in conversation about their classes.

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

Sincerely,

Connor Cook, EdD
Head of Middle School

School Starts Later on Monday, April 16

We have late arrival on Monday, April 16. **Students will begin the school day at 9:00 a.m.**

Social Dance Opportunity: Registration Is April 19

Online registration for Dance Club 2024 will be held on Thursday, April 19, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Dance Club provides a social dance opportunity for boys and girls entering seventh grade in fall 2018. It includes six dance lessons (think waltz, fox-trot, tango, etc.) held on certain Sundays in fall 2018. Each lesson will last one hour and 15 minutes.

In addition to students from St. Francis, our dance club group comprises students from the following six schools: Memorial Middle School, Spring Branch Middle School, Duchesne Academy of the Sacred Heart, The Regis School of the Sacred Heart, St. Cecilia Catholic School, and St. Michael Catholic School. [Note: There are other dance club groups around town based on school, but this is ours.] ***Each current sixth-grade parent should have already received a packet in the mail with exact dates, dues, venue, and other details.***

Space is limited to the first 450 registrants from the seven participating schools—so not everyone who wants to participate will be able to do so. On April 19, participants will register [here](#) once registration opens at 9:00 a.m. If you aren't able to secure a spot for your child, it is recommended that you register for the wait-list. The cost for joining the wait-list is \$25. If registration is later confirmed, the balance of the dues will be charged to your card at that time.

Parents will be able to sign up to chaperone the dance classes, and dads are especially welcome to attend! More on that later.

Questions may be directed to [Lorie Herod](#) or [Amy Walton](#).

KOBI Photo Contest: Entries Due April 20

For the past few years, we have honored the memory of Kobi Pickett

(daughter of former SFES second-grade teacher Stephanie Pickett) by hosting a very special photography contest and show. Kobi had a passion for the visual arts—especially for photography and for creating beautiful designs based on bible verses.

The theme of this year's Keep on Being Incredible (KOBI) Photo Contest is "strength," which is something we've all had to rely heavily on this year due to Hurricane Harvey. All Middle School students are invited to participate. **Entries are due by Friday, April 20**, and will be on display April 30-May 7.

For more information about the contest, please [click here](#). The contest entry form is available [here](#).

Questions? Please [e-mail Mrs. Chandler](#).

Register Now for 2018-19 MS Athletics and MSPE

Attention, rising sixth through eighth graders! It's time now to register your athletics and PE selections for the 2018-19 school year. Please log into your [My Backpack](#) account, click the "My Forms" link, and submit your student's selections for next year via the Middle School Athletics and Physical Education Registration Form.

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 9

- *Regular Schedule/Dress Uniform Day*
- *Honors Math Testing Day (During Math Class)*
- *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*

Tuesday, April 10

- *Grades 6-8: Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*

- *Grade 5: Special 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*
 - *Fifth-Grade AALC Field Trip to Bayou Bend: 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.*
 - *Howler Practice: 10:45-11:15 a.m. in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall*
-

Wednesday, April 11

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *HAIS Common Reply Due*
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Festival T-shirt Surplus Sale: 8:00-9:00 a.m. in the Gay Foyer*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
 - *Howler Practice: 11:20-11:55 a.m. in the Dance Room*
-

Thursday, April 12

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
- *Ticket Sales for Annie (Spring Musical) Open: Tickets will be for sale online April 12-May 5*
- *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*
- *Festival T-shirt Surplus Sale: 8:00-9:00 a.m. in the Gay Foyer*
- *Middle School Councils: 9:15-10:00 a.m. in classrooms*

- *Howler Practice: 1:45-2:30 p.m. in the Gym*
 - *Middle School Festival Pep Rally: 2:35-3:05 p.m. in the Gym*
-

Friday, April 13

- *Grades 5, 7, & 8: Regular Schedule/Regular Friday Uniform*
 - *Grade 6: Special Schedule/Regular Daily Uniform*
 - *NJHS Meeting: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*
 - *Sixth-Grade Field Trip to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Houston Museum of Natural Science: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.*
 - *Howlers Cheer at Pep Rallies: Lower School—9:15 a.m. in the Gym; Primary School—10:15 a.m. on the South Campus*
-

Sunday, April 15

- *St. Francis Festival Fiesta: Noon-4:00 p.m. on the Main Campus*
-

Monday, April 16

- *Special Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - ***Late Start for Students: 9:00 a.m.***
 - *No Fifth-Grade PE*
 - *No Chapel*
 - *Q4 Progress Reports Online*
-

Tuesday, April 17

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Honors English Writing Testing 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*
-

Wednesday, April 18

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m. in the Fine Arts Center*
-

Thursday, April 19

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Middle School Council Election Notices Sent Home*
 - *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*
 - *Middle School Class Meeting: 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the Fine Arts Center*
-

Friday, April 20

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Friday Uniform*
- *NJHS Meeting (Officer Elections): 7:15-7:45 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*

- *WEB Activity:* 10:45-11:15 a.m. in classrooms

Church

Honoring Mothers and Their Graduates

On **Sunday, May 13**, we will honor our mothers and our graduates during Sunday services. If you are graduating from eighth grade, high school, or college and would like to be recognized in the bulletin, please [e-mail Cindy Huteson](#).

Day of Pentecost Baptisms Are May 20

Sunday, May 20, is the Day of Pentecost, a Principal Feast Day celebrating the birth of the church—and an especially appropriate day to offer the Sacrament of Baptism. To schedule a Pentecost baptism, please contact [Amy Homer](#) at 713.458.6307.

Join Us for a Pentecost Party!

Since we celebrate the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost, what better way to rejoice than with a party? Mark your calendars for food, fun, and festivities on **Sunday, May 20, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. in the Wheatcroft Parish Hall.**

SCENES Summer Theater Camp

Registration for SCENES, one of the highest-quality theater camps in Houston, is now open! [Visit our website for more information and to register.](#)

Camp #1: *Urinetown*

July 9–13

Grades 7–12

Camp #2: *Honk*

July 16–27

Grades 2–High School

CAMP #3: MUSICAL REVIEW

July 30–August 3

Songs from Disney, *Matilda*, *Annie*, and Classic Musical Theater
Grades K–6