



SVMS New Families “Cliff Notes” 2024-2025

An Insider’s Guide to St. Vincent Martyr School

Created by SVMS parents to help ease
new families’ transition into the school

SCHOOL CONTACTS

St. Vincent Martyr School

26 Green Village Road / Madison, NJ 07940
973-377-1104

School Website: www.svmsnj.org

Principal: Sister Noreen Holly, SC

Vice Principal: Miss Anne Marie Gisoldi

Flynn and O'Hara Uniform Store

SVMS summer, winter, and gym uniforms for all grades.

130 Baldwin Road/ Parsippany, New Jersey 07054
973-882-0833

www.flynnohara.com

Alfred's Sport Shop

SVMS gym uniforms (only) for all grades.

32 Main Street / Madison, New Jersey 07940
973-377-0051

www.alfredssportsshop.com

New Families Welcome Committee Chairpersons

Laura Livoti: cappetts@gmail.com / 908-337-6817

Caitlin Villa: caitlinvilla@gmail.com / 908-507-1449

AUGUST

Important Preparations Before School Begins

Forms

It is best to get all required forms to the school office before September, especially the required medical forms. Once school begins, there are many more forms and paperwork to complete.

All forms are available on the school's website (www.svmsnj.org, under Admissions or Parents/Nurse) or from Mary McGuire in the school's front office at mmcguire@svmsnj.org.

If your child has food allergies, please talk with the school nurse Ellen Romain (973-377-1104 Ext. #211) about school policies and procedures regarding food allergies, once school begins.

School Phone Number - 973-377-1104

Please enter this number into your cell phone, work phone, etc. Circumstances will arise when you will need this number handy. We have all found ourselves running late from an appointment, dialing this number. Be assured that if it happens to you, the office will notify your child and keep him/her safe until you arrive.

Website - www.svmsnj.org

Familiarize yourself with the school website. Summer assignments, school calendar, medical forms, uniform code, school policies, school closings, extra-curricular information, archived eNews items, and many other things are available at your convenience.

It is extremely important that you set your notification preferences on the school website to get the most important announcements and emergency eBlasts: Go to the Tools (gear icon) and choose "My Account," then "Subscriptions," "Manage," and "Other Areas." **Select your Child's Grade**, "SVMS Features," "Weekly News," and click the green "I'M DONE" button.

Summer Reading Requirements

Summer reading lists and book report forms for all grade levels are

available on the school website, under “Students.” All book reports are due the First Day of School and upper grades are tested within the first month of school.

School Calendar

The calendar is posted on the school website. Be sure to transfer all school events to your home calendar prior to the start of the school year. Noting all sports, school breaks, holidays, and activities makes planning ahead much easier. You can also download the iCalendar from the school’s website. This will post the calendar onto your phone or device and update all revisions/additions/deletions throughout the year.

Pre-School Playdate: Thursday, August 15th Morning Sessions

Incoming pre-school students are invited play with other Pre-K students on the school playground behind the Parish Ministry Center (the building next to the school on Green Village Road). This is a great way for your child to make friends before school begins.

New Families Ice Cream Social - Thursday, August 22nd at 3pm

Come meet other school families for ice cream in the school parking lot and melt away those new school jitters! Bring a topping to share.

Uniform Details

The official Uniform Policy is listed on the school website under “Parents,” then “Services & Vendors.” **Students wear the Summer Uniform until October 15th and then again from April 15th – June, though students may opt to wear the Winter Uniform year-round if they prefer.**

- **The Summer Uniform for K-5 students** is navy walking shorts, white SVMS short sleeve golf shirt, no-logo white or navy crew socks (not quarter length, though girls may wear knee-highs).
- **The Middle School Summer Uniform** only differs in that the boys wear khaki shorts and girls wear navy skirts. Middle School students may wear the SVMS crew neck sweatshirt in place of a sweater/vest. Shoes must be brown, navy, or black.
- **Current trends:** boys wear Sperry Boat Shoes or Merrell Jungle Moc slip-ons. Girls wear Sperry’s, Vans or Steve Madden slip-ons. Suburban Shoes in Madison has list of approved SVMS student’s shoes.

- **On gym days**, all students wear the navy SVMS gym t-shirt, navy SVMS gym shorts, socks, and sneakers. *There is a different Winter Uniform for October 16th to April 12th.*

Uniform Purchase

School uniforms can be purchased at **Flynn & O'Hara in Parsippany** or you can order online at www.flynnohara.com.

The gym uniform for all grades is also available at **Alfred's Sport Shop on Main Street in Madison** or you can order online at svmsgymuniforms2024.itemorder.com/ until August 5.

Alfred's can personalize Middle School sweatshirts with the student's last name. Before making a purchase at either, visit the school's Uniform Closet located behind the stage in the school gym. Summer hours will be announced by email. There are many gently used uniforms (shirts, shorts, pants, gym shorts, jumpers, skirts, sweaters, sweatpants and sweatshirts) available at no cost.

Classroom Supplies

Teachers purchase the classroom supplies for **Grades K-3** and they will be distributed on the first day of school. This is very helpful to us parents! A bill will be sent home for the amount you owe.

- **Grades 4-8** have a very specific, per-subject school supplies list, created by the teachers, that you must purchase on your own and bring on the first day of school.
- **Students in 4th – 8th grades** have lockers, so you must buy a lock. You should practice the combination with your child. Students in all grades should stock up on clear contact paper and jumbo-sized fabric "book socks" before the textbooks start coming home to be covered the first week of school, as stores sell out quickly!

Locker Ladders

All 4th Grade students and new students in Grades 5-8 will be given a Locker Ladder on the First Day of School. The specific brand SVMS uses fits our narrow locker dimensions.

While **Locker Ladders are mandatory for 4th Grade**, they are a very helpful organization aid for all students. Older students (not new) can purchase a replacement Locker Ladder through the school.

Chromebooks

Students in Grades 4-8 must purchase their own Chromebook with a sturdy protective case. Many students have the Acer, Asus, or Lenovo brand. The mandatory Chromebook provisioning sessions are offered at school on a few August evenings before school begins.

- All new Chromebooks must be provisioned to accept school-approved filters on one of these dates.

K-8 Morning Drop-Off and Dismissal

The school has a very specific procedure for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up, which has proven to be the safest and most efficient system. Please refer to the School Handbook for details. **Of the utmost importance is to not park in the School/Church parking lot and always cross the street(s) at the crossing guards.**

No student is ever allowed to exit a car in the parking lot. Parents who have school business, must first drop off their child in the car line and then circle around to enter the parking lot alone. Please take the time to read and understand the drop-off/pick-up procedure and discuss it with your child(ren) to minimize their confusion on the first day of school. If you have any questions, please call your New Family “Welcome Buddy” or the front office and they will gladly help you.

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL for Kindergarten – 8th Grade:
Wednesday, September 4th at 8:15am**

First Day Arrival for 1st - 8th Grade

On the first day of school, drop off your child in the coned-off car drop-off line. All cars must enter on Wilmer Street (one way street). The 8th grade students will be holding signs in the front lobby to direct all students to their classes. **The School and Church parking lot is off limits due to the safety of the children.** Faculty may park in the lot, as they arrive well before the children.

Wilmer Street is also a no-parking zone because parishioners park there for 8:30 am daily mass. **Please be careful to never block any driveway entrances, whether they are for the school, church, or the Presbyterian Church next door (we are not authorized to use or cut-through their parking lot).**

Please be especially respectful of our neighbors. If your child walks to school (either with you or alone), please refer to the detailed instructions on the school website under "Parents," choose "Handbook & Policies," and select "Arrival & Dismissal Procedures." **It could be very dangerous if these procedures are not followed.**

Kindergarten First Day Orientation, Wednesday, September 4th

To help our Kindergartners with those first day jitters, the parents of Kindergarten students will accompany their children on the First Day of School for Kindergarten Orientation. You will be asked to go directly to your child's classroom at your assigned time.

Kindergarten Dismissal

Parents must pick up Kindergarten students after school at the Main Doors of the school (parking lot side) by the SVMS Eagle statue. **On half-days, Kindergarten students are dismissed at 12:10pm and on full days, they are dismissed at 2:40pm.** (Kindergarten is always dismissed 10 minutes before the rest of the school).

1st - 8th Grade Dismissal Line Assignment

Please discuss the school's dismissal procedure with your child and filled out the Dismissal Form selecting your dismissal line preference. Your options are: Wilmer Street, Green Village Road, or "Walker". You can find this form on the website under "Parents"/ "Forms."

Backpack

All students need a **full-sized backpack** on the first day of school to carry in their summer book reports, math workbooks (for grades that use them), and any other assignments. Grades 4-8 will also bring in all of their school supplies & locker locks. The backpacks for Grades 4-8 must be large and sturdy enough to hold their Chromebook, along with several heavy textbooks and supplies.

Half-Days to Start the School Year

Grades 1-8 will be dismissed at 12:20pm September 4th-6th.

Kindergarten will be dismissed at 12:10pm on these days. Full days for Kindergarten - 8th Grade begin on Monday, September 9th.

After Care (begins September 9th)

Students who are registered in after school care may stay until 5:45pm, where they will be supervised by faculty members for homework and playtime. You pay for this program per semester, not day-to-day, though there are part-time options.

Your child can still participate in after-school activities (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Enrichment Programs, Clubs) if they go to After Care, but it is extremely important that you notify the moderators ahead of time and let them know that they should expect your child later in the afternoon. Please contact the school office for more information.

Playdates

If your child is going home with another child, you must send a note to the teacher that day. A note is needed anytime someone other than yourself (grandparent, relative, babysitter, friend, etc.) is taking your child home.

PRE-SCHOOL: START OF PRE-K SCHOOL YEAR

Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4 Parents Meetings on Wednesday, Sept. 4th, Parent/Child Open House on Thursday, Sept. 5th, and a short session on Friday, Sept. 6th.

If you have a child entering PK3 or PK4, you will be expected to attend this mandatory parents meeting in the teacher's classroom. **Parents only** are to attend this meeting. The teachers request that you not bring your preschooler or other children (with the exception of small infants).

Parent tip: you should try to arrange your babysitter well in advance, as this is a difficult day to find childcare during the first week of school. Also at the Parents Meeting, you will sign up for a 45-minute Student Play Session in the classroom on September 6th.

Pre-School First Week

The school year begins with a transitional week for PreK3 and PreK4

children. The allotted time schedules that you chose will be offered. Some children have the stamina to jump right in. Others may need time to adjust and parents and teachers can make this determination as the week progresses. Please make sure that you or a designated adult will be available in the event that an early pick up is needed.

Pre-School Drop-off – Doors open at 8:30 am.

Pre-schoolers enter through the doors in the alcove entrance on Green Village Road, where the teachers will greet the students and walk them to the classroom.

Pre-School Supplies

Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 students need a full-sized backpack. They also need to bring in an extra set of clothes (in a bag labeled with the child's name) on the first day of school. All other school supplies will be provided by the teacher. You must pack a snack and drink for your child every day.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL CLASSROOMS ARE COMPLETELY NUT-FREE (*the teachers check labels and will send home any questionable foods*).

SEPTEMBER

Welcome Back to School Mass: Sunday, September 8th

The 9am mass on Sunday, September 8th is dedicated to the SVMS community. The students wear their school uniforms for this special celebration.

Back to School Nights: September 10th & September 11th

These adults-only nights are for parents to meet teachers and receive information about classroom procedures and expectations. **Parents of 6th - 8th Graders will come on September 10th** and the parents of **Kindergartners - 5th Graders will come on September 11th**. The evenings are broken into "periods" so you can visit more than one classroom if you have multiple children in the school. Since 6th-8th grade change classrooms for each subject, parents will have time to go to every class and meet each teacher briefly. Additionally, the Class Parents

will have sign-up sheets set out on a table, so you can volunteer to get involved in class parties and activities during the year.

Classroom Dues

Your registration contract for this school year included the HSA Class Dues you owe for each child's class. The fees paid cover five teacher gifts during the year and any buy-out costs for programs you choose to not participate in (SCRIP or HSA Volunteering).

It should be noted that all teachers' gifts are included in this payment. The teachers receive gifts from the SVMS parent-funded Home & School Association (HSA): at the beginning of the school year for classroom preparations, at Christmas, on Teacher Appreciation Day, on his/her birthday, and at the end of the school year.

Your family may choose to give the teacher an additional gift, but please realize you have already contributed toward the class gift.

Virtus Training

All parents who want to volunteer at school at any time throughout the year are required to participate in one "Protecting God's Children" workshop. To learn more, go to www.svmsnj.org and select "Parents", choose "Virtus Training", and then register at www.virtusonline.org.

For all parents, both new and returning, Virtus Certification compliance standards were revised in 2023 – if you believe you are certified, please confirm your status has not lapsed. New parents should send Virtus certificates to Vice Principal Miss Gisoldi, who keeps these records.

NWEA MAP Testing

The NWEA assessments are called Measures of Academic Progress (MAPs) and track a student's academic growth over a year. The standardized test identifies gaps and directs the curriculum for the teachers. It is administered three times throughout the year: September, February, and May.

Math Website

In addition to being the summer math program for students in 2nd - 8th grade, IXL at www.ixl.com/signin/Paterson, is a web-based instruction and assessment resource where math teachers may assign homework. All students will be issued a username and password to participate. Please make a note of your log-on information. You may also download the free IXL app.

School Fundraiser Opportunities

In the first month of school, you will receive many notices about the fundraising opportunities at SVMS. The main fundraisers for the school are: the March Spring Fundraiser and the RaiseRight program (explained in the "OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION" on page 19). When you register for RaiseRight, you must re-register each year, SVMS earns a percentage of the purchase each time you check-out. At Stop & Shop, you must use your keycard upon check-out.

Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts

SVMS is fortunate to have an active Scouts program. Cub Scouts is for boys in Kindergarten - 5th Grade and then they advance to Boy Scouts. Girls begin with Daisies in Kindergarten, followed by Brownies for 2nd-3rd Grade, and then Girl Scouts begins in 4th. If your child is interested in joining Scouts, please ask in the front office for your troop leader's contact information to register. Any parent interested in helping or chaperoning trips must complete the Virtus Training Workshop.

Fall Sports

Registration invitations for all of the Fall Sports will come to you via the SVMS Sunday eNewsletter (update your SVMS website personal settings to receive these important notifications) and they are also available on the school website, under Athletics.

- Cross-Country – Open to boys and girls in grades 2-8.
- Volleyball – Open to both boys and girls in grades 7-8.

OCTOBER

Picture Days in October

These are the days when your child and his/her class will take individual

and class pictures. You will be provided with details via the SVMS Weekly eNewsletter as to when this will occur and what uniform or dress clothes your child should wear. Sibling photos are also offered. Make-up photos will be announced and take place in the photographer's studio.

School Closed: October 9th & 14th

All SVMS teachers will attend a Teachers Workshop on Wednesday, October 11th and Monday, October 14th is a federal holiday. School is closed Wednesday and Monday. Classes resume on Tuesday, October 15th.

NOVEMBER

High School Placement Test

November 8th– This standardized diocesan test is administered to all 8th grade students. All diocesan high schools require these test scores as part of the application process. Other high schools have additional admission/placement tests, which differ per school. There is a very informative 8th Grade Parents Meeting early in the school year to explain everything.

Open House: November 12th & 13th

For two days, SVMS opens its doors to welcome families who are considering enrollment in SVMS. It does not affect the school day, but it's a nice way to get involved.

Pre-K Parent-Teacher Conferences: November 21st – 22nd

Parents of Pre-K students will have a special opportunity to meet with their child's teacher to discuss their progress to date, as well as any concerns or issues, to ensure a successful year. You will be assigned an afternoon time on either November 21st (early dismissal at 11:30am) or daytime on November 22nd (no school for PK). *Plan your childcare in advance. Children may not attend the conference.*

Ski Club

The SVMS Family Ski & Snowboard Club begins in January, with registration taking place in November. The 4-session club meets weekly on Sundays and is available to all school-aged children and their parents.

The club is not limited to SVMS families. Parents are responsible for transportation to/from Shawnee Mountain in the Poconos, approximately an hour from Madison.

Thanksgiving Holiday

Wednesday before Thanksgiving is a half-day for all grades.

Day-After-Thanksgiving Parade: Friday, November 29th

Madison hosts a spectacular Friday night parade as we gear-up for the next big holiday: Christmas! Some students march alongside Father George and Sister Noreen on the SVMS float, representing our wonderful school. Be sure to stick around for the Christmas Tree Lighting after the parade. For families new to Madison, this is a “not to be missed” town event. Plan to go and enjoy a fun night!

DECEMBER

K-8 Parent-Teacher Conferences: December 3rd, 4th, 5th

This is a time for you to meet one-on-one with your child’s teacher(s) and discuss his/her progress to date, as well as any issues, to ensure your child has a successful year.

- Teachers of grades K-3 will send home a conference appointment form, which you sign and send back.
- Parents in Grades 4-8 will select conference times themselves on a sign-up website. An email from school will explain how to do this. Please do not bring your school-aged children to the conference; small infants are an exception.
- Students in Kindergarten – grade 8 will have 12:20 pm dismissal on each of these days.

SVMS Christmas Shop: December 11th & 12th

Santa’s Helpers set up a fantastic shop so the children can go Christmas shopping for their family members. Each child can select gifts for up to 10 people. Every item in the shop is \$2! There is an additional charge of \$2 for wrapping your total number of gifts. The children will shop during school hours with their teachers. This is a student-only shop.

Breakfast with Santa: Saturday, December 14th

Bring the whole family to enjoy the Christmas festivities in the gym. Breakfast and delicious treats are served, along with a live Christmas band, and fun activities for all. Pictures with Santa are provided for a small fee. Older students can volunteer to help at the craft stations.

Christmas Concert: Thursday, December 19th

All children in Kindergarten - 5th Grade are required to participate in this event. It is a wonderfully festive night of singing by our children's beautiful voices. All children must wear their "Sunday best". Girls wear holiday dresses or skirts and most boys wear ties and navy sport coats (Madison's Kids Consignment on Lincoln Place has an abundance of gently worn sport coats in most sizes).

The children gather in their homerooms about 20 minutes before the show; they are also dismissed after the show from their homerooms.

Christmas Break

Monday, December 23rd – Wednesday, January 1st.

School is dismissed after Candy Cane Races on Friday, December 20th.

Basketball

An SVMS favorite! Most children participate. The intramural practices and games take place on Saturdays, except for some weekdays during Christmas Break. Kindergarteners start in January with boys and girls playing together. All other grades are separated by gender and grade (1st-2nd, 3rd-4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th). **All parents are required to work at the concession stand or monitor the hallway at least once** during the season. There are many coaching or assistant coaching opportunities if you have the skills!

Travel Basketball

3rd-8th graders can join the travel teams. The number of games increases respectively with the grade. Games take place on weeknights and weekends against surrounding area Catholic schools (they will not conflict with the intramural games). 3rd and 4th graders who wish to play on the travel team must also play on the intramural team. Parents

are required to help at the concession stand or be a hall monitor during one game each season.

JANUARY

Christmas Break is over! Back to school on January 2nd.

Exams

It's time for 3rd – 8th graders to start preparing for mid-term exams. The teachers provide study packets for the students. It may seem like a lot for younger grades, but it teaches them good study habits and gets them ready for future test-taking. Be sure that your child gets plenty of rest and eats a good breakfast!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

School is closed January 20th.

Catholic Schools Week

This week coincides with the national celebration of Catholic Schools Week and opens with the weekend Masses on January 25th – 26th. Students are encouraged to attend mass wearing their school uniform to show their Catholic school pride! There are many special events and treats for the children throughout the week, including a school-wide Day of Service and a “Family Night.” Parents are welcome to attend events during the week and volunteer to help in the classrooms, as needed. As always, the SVMS Weekly eNewsletter will be full of information.

FEBRUARY

First Reconciliation

The majority of 2nd graders celebrate this sacrament, although they are not required to do so at this time. The Parish Ministry Center will send out information about Reconciliation, as they handle all sacramental preparations. Please refer to these correspondences for details. If your child is older and has not received his/her First Reconciliation, please speak with Sister Noreen to make arrangements.

President's Day Break

Friday, February 14th – Tuesday, February, 18th

Students will be dismissed at 12:20pm on Friday, February 14th.

MARCH

Ash Wednesday - March 5th

There will be a delayed start at 8:45 am because it is Ash Wednesday, so we must allow for the mass traffic to exit the Church parking lot. Please do not arrive earlier as we are trying to avoid interference with parishioners arriving to the 8:30 am Mass.

Spring Sports

Spring sports will be starting up in March. Information about all sports teams will be sent home via the weekly eNewsletter.

Spring Fundraiser: Saturday, March 22nd

This is a HUGE EVENT and the biggest money-maker for the school. The Spring Fundraiser is an adults-only theme party with auctions, raffles, food, cocktails, and music. Everyone is asked to volunteer in some aspect. There are many opportunities for every talent and schedule: decorations, food, ticket sales, auction preparations, publicity, etc. It takes months of work, but is worth it!

The Fundraiser consists of a Silent Auction (items donated by local merchants and school families) and Chance Auction (buy tickets, drop them in a bag, and hope your winning ticket is drawn). You will get word about this event early in the Fall and you should try to attend a meeting. It's a great opportunity to get involved and meet people. Refer to the Weekly eNews or website for details.

APRIL

Living Stations: April 15th

This is a beautiful display of the Stations of the Cross, presented by a few students from each grade. Consider leaving younger children home with a babysitter, as it is a late night and a very quiet, solemn event.

Easter Break and Spring Break - April 17th – April 28th

Easter Break and Spring Break coincide, beginning with a half-day early dismissal on Holy Thursday, April 17th and running through April 25th. Classes resume on April 28th.

MAY

First Holy Communion

Calling all 2nd graders! The Parish Center handles all communication regarding dates and preparations for the First Holy Communions. The sacraments for school will take place on May 3rd. Your child will receive an information packet with complete details early in the school year.

- There will be a special SVMS Communion Mass and Reception for our school's 2nd Grade students and their families to celebrate together. Parents, grandparents, and siblings are welcome to attend.

School Play: May 1st & May 2nd

The school play is a great opportunity for the children to show their talent in front of an audience (or stay behind the scenes on Stage Crew). There are many ways parents can help out. It is not a big budget production, so most props and costumes are hand-made.

Madison May Pole Dance: Date TBD

First Grade students can voluntarily participate in the May Pole Dance, which will take place in late April or early May, in front of Madison Town Hall (Hartley Dodge Building), which is also Madison Green & Clean Day, when residents clean-up Madison. 1st Grade Parents can volunteer to chair the May Pole Dance and practice with the children during school recess (no experience required).

Pre-K Parent-Teacher Conferences: May 8th – 9th

These are the same as the conferences in November. You can meet with your child's teacher on either May 8th (early dismissal at 11:30am) or on May 9th (no school for PK). Children are not permitted to attend.

Spring Concert: May 15th

This is a special evening of song, when we get to enjoy our children's beautiful voices. Students in K – 5th grade participate. The children

must wear their “Sunday best”, so a detailed explanation of attire will come in Sister Noreen’s weekly letter in the eNews. After the concert, the children go back to their classrooms where parents pick them up.

Field Day

A fun-filled morning of games at Dodge Field in late spring. Field Day for grades K-4 takes place on one day, grades 5–8 on another. The grades participating in Field Day will go to school in the morning and walk as a group to Dodge Field on Greenwood Avenue. Parents will pick-up their children at Dodge Field at 12 pm, though you are welcome to go earlier if you want to watch some of the events.

If it rains, all activities take place in the school gym with an early dismissal only for those children who participated in Field Day. **THE STUDENTS IN GRADES NOT PARTICIPATING IN FIELD DAY WILL HAVE A REGULAR FULL DAY.** Parent volunteers (Virtus certification required) are always needed for Field Day.

Instrumental Music Concert: May 19th

This event showcases the SVMS instrumental musicians. The students perform musical scores they have learned and practiced throughout the school year. The date will be announced in the spring.

JUNE

Kindergarten Screening

Throughout the spring months, the Kindergarten teachers meet individually with children applying to Kindergarten to make sure they will be comfortable with the program. Children attending SVMS pre-school will be screened during their class time (parents do not need to be there). Children who attend other pre-schools will be scheduled an appointment time to come to the school.

Library Books

Please return any library books in early June. You will save the librarian a lot of time preparing delinquency notices. Replacement fees will be charged if library books are not returned.

8th Grade Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation

Thursday, June 5th and Friday, June 6th

The 8th Grade Graduation is a two-part event. The graduates and their families come together for the Baccalaureate Mass on Thursday and then they celebrate together at the Graduation Ceremony on the first Friday in June. A committee of parents, in conjunction with the school guidelines, plans and organizes the events and activities that make up this special time for our graduates.

Kindergarten Graduation

This is an exciting morning for the Kindergarteners and their proud parents, grandparents, and siblings (those in the school are allowed to attend the festivities). Kindergarten Graduation is complete with all the pomp you would expect: caps, diplomas, speeches (Principal and Pastor), and joyful songs by the children. The graduation is followed by a reception. Teachers will send home information as the big day nears.

Last Day of School

The school year eases into summer with half-days the last few days of the year and the Last Day of School ends with an early dismissal. The last day of school is announced in the spring, once it is determined how many snow days have been used. This is a day of great celebration! Parents are encouraged to come and join the Last Day of School Assembly, which includes the exciting "Countdown to Summer".

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

SVMS Weekly eNewsletter

Every Friday, you will receive an email from school. It will include: a letter from either Principal Sister Noreen or Vice-Principal Miss Gisoldi, events taking place during the week, important announcements, and school/parish/ community news. All past eNewsletters are also available in the school website archives if you ever need to search for a specific news item or flyer from earlier weeks. Parents may submit Publication Requests to post committee meetings, announcements, and other local events in the eNews.

Notify the school right away if you believe you are not receiving these

very important emails, so your notification settings can be corrected.

Homework Folders

Students in grades K-3, will have a daily homework folder, in which all homework and some teacher correspondence will be placed. On one side is information to be kept at home and the other side is homework and/or papers to be signed and returned.

Test Folder

Each Tuesday, students in grade 4-8 will bring home a test folder. This folder contains all of your child's tests for the week, as well as, a parent signature log.

You need to sign the log AND INITIAL EACH TEST. Most teachers require that the students make corrections on the tests also. Please return the folder the next day.

Wednesday Mass

Every Wednesday morning, all grades attend the 8:30am Mass, either in the gym or in the Church. If a Holy Day of Obligation falls during the week, School Mass will change to that day.

School Closings/Delayed Openings

You will receive notification from Alert Solutions if school is closed/delayed. You will need to enroll in the system early in the school year. You should appoint several different devices (in the event of power outages) where you would like to receive messages from the school (home phone, cell phone, email, etc.). **School closings are always posted on the school's website as well.**

School Security

SVMS school security is handled with the utmost seriousness. There are many safety measures already in place and we are continually studying any areas where improvement is possible. Sister Noreen attends two Safety and Security Workshops at the Morris County Police Academy each year, which help create and continually improve our Emergency Operations Plan.

SVMS shares a close collaboration with the Madison Police Department (MPD). We have a police liaison officer who often visits our school to provide a comfortable and familiar police presence. MPD collaborated with SVMS to complete a Critical Incident Mapping to give the MPD instant live viewing of our school. Several building enhancements have been installed in recent years, such as: impact reinforcements to all doors and windows, a two-door vestibule at the entrance, a large bollard to block the school's front doors, interior and exterior security and surveillance cameras, and fortified doors in the gym. Plus, policies are in place to limit visitors and other non-staff access to the building.

Snack Time

There is a school-wide snack time from 9:50am until 10am every day in the classrooms. You must pack a NUT-FREE snack and a drink for your child(ren) every day. As previously noted, talk with your child about snack time. Some children eat lunch very early and may not need a big snack, while others eat later and may need something more substantial.

Simply Gourmet

The SVMS lunch program is provided by Simply Gourmet, whose goal is to provide high quality food at a fair price. Students can choose to participate every day or any individual day or days during the month.

Orders must be placed on the Simply Gourmet website

(www.simplygourmetlunches.com) **three days in advance of the day you would like to receive lunch service.** Simply Gourmet encourages families to order for the whole month to avoid missing days. If your needs changed at the last minute, just call Simply Gourmet at 973-891-1955.

Class Parents

Every class has two parents who volunteer to assist the teacher with class parties and help maintain teacher-parent communication during the school year. Introduce yourself to your class parents. They will be a great resource to you! If you are interested in being a Class Parent, email your child's teacher after you receive your Class List in August.

After School Activities

There are many after-school activities and enrichment programs that take place throughout the year. Please be aware of the exact pick-up time and location, as they do vary.

If your child is in After Care, he/she can still participate in any other after-school activities, but it is very important that the moderator of After Care knows to expect them after their activity. Likewise, please notify the after-school activity moderator, so they know to take your child to After Care when the activity ends.

Enrichment Programs

There are three terms of Enrichment Programs at SVMS – Fall, Winter, and Spring. A wide variety of programs are offered to students in Grades K – 8 to satisfy a variety of interests (Art, Brain Teasers, Chess, Legos, Sewing, Sports, Stock Investing, etc.)

The 6-8-session programs are offered after school on Tuesdays for one-hour. The sign-up spots are limited to a certain number of participants, so read through the registration instructions when they are posted in the eNewsletter and be ready to sign-up at the exact time the site opens.

Transitional Years: Kindergarten, 3rd Grade and 4th Grade are years of big transition. **Kindergarten** is a full-day program, filled with learning and special classes, resulting in very tired children at the end of the day. You may want to limit after-school activities in the beginning of the school year to avoid problems. **3rd graders** realize what homework really is! They are gaining more responsibilities and expected to perform. The summer before 3rd grade is a good time to give your child more responsibility to prepare them for the upcoming school year.

4th graders begin switching classrooms for different subjects and it can be very stressful for them. They pack up their books for the morning and then pack again for the afternoon. Practice makes perfect! You can help them practice, but if they are really struggling, you can request some help. After the first few weeks of school, they are expected to have everything, or they will be given Disciplinary Referrals (see the official Family Handbook).

Thankfully, for all of us, most teachers post homework assignments on their Google Classroom pages. This is especially helpful if your child forgets to write down an assignment. Keep in mind, all of the children are feeling the same pressure in the beginning - don't worry, they do get it eventually!

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a segment of the Pre-K and Kindergarten students' Religion curriculum. It is founded in scriptural and liturgical study, framed by Maria Montessori's principles of education. This program allows children to understand the Gospel through the use of sensorial rich materials. The children are free to work with these materials that represent essential proclamations of the Christian message.

STREAM Program

STREAM was introduced at SVMS in 2011. STREAM brings together Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Math in an integrated program for PK3 through 8th grade students.

RaiseRight (formerly Shop with SCRIP) Program

All families in SVMS are obligated by contract to participate in the school's RaiseRight Program or pay the "buy-out" fee. RaiseRight allows SVMS families to purchase gift cards from over 300 retailers. When you do your regular shopping, SVMS will earn between 2% and 15% at NO EXTRA COST TO YOU.

To register, go to www.raiseright.com/enroll.

- Go to "Join an existing program," using the enrollment code 17LDCB7918734.
- Make a note of your username and password for future orders. SVMS encourages families to make as many of their regular purchases as possible by using RaiseRight cards with a minimum requirement of \$2500 per year per family.
- You may "buy-out" of the SCRIP program by paying \$250 to the SVMS HSA in your school contract. Any family who does not fulfill either option will be charged the \$250 "buy-out" with an additional \$50 fee.
- If this is not paid, the fee will be added to the family's tuition the following year.

Instrumental Music Lessons

SVMS offers musical instruction after school through an outsourced music company. A variety of lessons are offered to students in Grades K-8. Information will come home early in the school year, so be on the lookout if your child has an interest.

Field Trips

Every grade has field trips. Please sign the Permission Slip when it comes home and return it promptly, with payment if necessary. Teachers will ask for parents to chaperone the trip. Please understand that as a chaperone, you cannot bring any other children; your focus needs to be on the students in that class.

Birthdays

On your child's birthday, he/she gets a free Tag Day, meaning he/she can dress in regular clothes. They can also bring in a treat that is in accordance with our allergy policy, which should be scheduled in advance with the teacher. Please use the Class Group Email to notify all parents of the ingredients a few days ahead, in case there is a food allergy concern. Regarding party invitations, you may only send invitations home through the school if you are inviting the whole class, or all boys, or all girls. If only selecting a few children from the class, invitations should be sent from home.

Book Fair

The Book Fair takes place in the Library. You can send in money with your child to purchase books themselves (they will have opportunities during the school day), or you can go together before or after school if they need your assistance. Teachers have Wish Lists so you can donate a book to the classroom or the Library.

Community Service Programs

The Community Service Committee provides opportunities for students to serve the needs of our community and parish. There are after-school opportunities, as well as, projects that can be done at home. You will receive information through the Weekly eNewsletter and must sign-up in advance for most of the projects.

School Store

SVMS has a wonderful School Store where you can purchase SVMS gear, spirit wear, and all sorts of fun school supplies and trinkets. Announcements will be posted in the Weekly eNews with days and times the School Store will be open for business.

School Library

The Library is always looking for volunteers to help repair and shelve books. Volunteers are especially needed during the second half of the school year. Please contact the librarian if you are interested. Donating a book to the School Library to commemorate your child's birthday is a great idea; ask the librarian for help with some suggestions.

Stewardship Gifts

This is an opportunity for parents and families to invest in SVMS by making a tax-deductible gift, which will cover the difference between school tuition and the actual cost of educating a student. The opportunity to make this tax-deductible gift is offered when you sign your tuition contract. Your gift can also be matched by your company's corporate educational gift matching program. If you missed this opportunity, there are forms in the school's front office.

GLOSSARY

After Care - Supervised care of students after school until 6pm; this service is provided for a fee.

Community Room – Large room on the school's lower level, where the children eat lunch and some parish and school parent meetings take place. This is also referred to as the School Cafeteria

eNewsletter – Important weekly email sent every Sunday to all school families. The eNewsletter includes: a letter from either Sister Noreen or Miss Gisoldi, announcements, news, and upcoming events. Be sure to set your notification preferences on the school website to get the most important announcements and emergency eBlasts.

Family Handbook – The official SVMS handbook, containing detailed explanations of all of the school’s rules, policies and procedures. It is required reading for each family. You can refer to the Family Handbook for detailed answers to all your questions.

Field Day – A fun-filled morning of games and activities, which takes place at Dodge Field (SVMS gym if inclement weather).

Half Days/Early Dismissal – On half-days, Kindergarten is dismissed at 12:10pm and 1st - 8th grades at 12:20pm. Pre-School teachers will give parents a detailed calendar at the Pre-School Parents Meeting on September 7th. A half-day for K-8 does not necessarily mean a half-day for Pre-School.

Lost and Found – Located in the front lobby under a table near the trophy case, where you can look for lost items. After a time, unclaimed items will be donated to local charities. Please write your child’s name on all clothing and coats so your things can be easily returned to you.

NWEA “MAP” Testing (Measures of Academic Progress) – A standardized test administered three times during the school year, which tracks each student’s academic growth. It identifies gaps and directs the curriculum for the teachers.

RaiseRight Program – Gift cards you purchase for use in retail and grocery stores which earn money for our school.

SVMS - Abbreviation for St. Vincent Martyr School.

SVMS HSA - Abbreviation for St. Vincent Martyr School Home and School Association. This is how you will make out most checks to participate in events and activities at school.

Tag Day – A special day when students are allowed to wear their choice of clothing to school (not the regular school uniform), within the guidelines in the Family Handbook. Usually, a Tag Day has a free-will donation and funds collected go to a selected charity. Your child will also enjoy a free Tag Day on his/her birthday.

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New Families Welcome Committee Chairpersons

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