

NEWSNOTE



FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK...

Dear SME Families,

Recently, Bishop Fisher shared some thoughts on Catholic education. A message that certainly resonated with me as our school celebrated Catholic Schools Week, Rev. Fisher wrote that Catholic education “delivers much more than academics. Families receive an education that is rooted in faith, that forms the whole person - mind, body, and spirit. Catholic education provides a nurturing environment where students are encouraged to grow in their relationship with God, in their service to others, and in their commitment to justice and truth.”

I was proud to read Bishop Fisher’s words because they reminded me so much of SME’s mission statement and the pillars of our school - social responsibility, spiritual growth, and academic excellence. In addition to delivering highly effective instruction and teaching a rigorous curriculum, which now includes IXL for Mathematics and a reading series based on the Science of Reading, our school also offers opportunities for students to grow outside of the classroom.

Last week, many of us began our Catholic Schools Week celebration on Sunday at Mass; we began the school week with a school -wide prayer service, during which a representative from each class contributed a petition, before we concluded the event with songs of praise. Some classes crafted cards for marginalized groups, and most of us contributed to our Souper Bowl food drive. As a school, we collected nearly 400 cans of soup, which will go to stock local food pantries! As a collective community, we should be comforted that the environment and culture of our school allows opportunities for our students to grow in their service of their brothers and sisters and in their commitment to justice, just as it helps them to grow academically.

In closing, I wanted to share with you all a message we communicated during last week’s open house. St. Mary’s Elementary School has been identified as a Tier 3 School, which means our projected enrollment for next year will be 350 students PK3 - Grade 8. We will continue to be intentional about our school programming, which will allow for continued organic growth. By continuing to focus on strengthening ties with our community, providing activities for student enrichment, and maintaining our levels of academic success as we pilot robust middle school initiatives, SME is positioned to continue to be a leader within the diocese.

Thank you for your partnership and for all you have done and will continue to do to ensure that SME continues to be so much more than just a school.

Mr. Olejniczak

- **Fri. 2/7** - Christian Witness Mass @ 8:30am, Date Knight Dance 6pm-8pm
- **Mon.- Fri. 2/17-2/21** - NO School
- **Wed. 2/26**- Spring/ Club/Sport Picture Day
- **Thurs. 2/27**- K & Grade 8 Graduation Picture Day
- **Fri. 2/28** - Meat Raffle 6pm-10pm
- **Wed. 3/5** - Ash Wednesday Mass 8:30am
- **Fri. 3/7** - Christian Witness Mass @ 8:30am
- **Fri. 4/4** - Christian Witness Mass @ 8:30am

UNIFORM DRIVE

We invite everyone to come in and browse through our uniform bins. Feel free to take as much or as little as you’d like! We have all different sizes/styles available to choose from!

Our goal is to *narrow down* our inventory to only a few bins!

The uniform bins will be available everyday M-F during all hours. The bins will be set up on a table outside the main office!

We welcome you to stop by at your convenience.



FINANCES

We are excited to share that our new email contact will be available to assist you with any inquiries.

Please direct all further questions/ concerns regarding financial services to the email below:

finances@smeschool.com

Thank you!



DATE KNIGHT DANCE

Mark your calendar for our annual Date Knight Dance, to be held on Friday 2/7 from 6-8pm. This event is for all of our boys and a special guest (mom, aunt, grandma, sister), it's going to be a great time!

To purchase tickets, click the link below:
<https://date-knight-dance-2025.cheddarup.com>

If you’re interested in volunteering, click the link below to sign-up:
<https://date-knight-dance-volunteers-2025-58551.cheddarup.com>



HSA

HSA Meeting

Anyone interested in learning more about HSA is welcome to attend our meeting tonight (2/5) at 5:30 in the Gathering Room (the conference room next to the Parish Center). We will be discussing the Date Knight Dance, Meat Raffle, Spring Book Fair, Penny Fair, the School Picnic, and more!

SME Parent Wear

Show your SME pride with SME Parent t-shirts. Each T-shirt is \$10. Adult sizes small through 2XL available. Sizes are limited to available inventory. Order using the following link: <https://sme-parent-wear.cheddarup.com>

SME Spirit Wear

Need SME Spirit Wear? We've got you covered! Each t-shirt is \$15, youth and adult sizes are available. Scan the QR code to order.



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ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2 St. Mary's Hill
Lancaster, NY 14086

Phone: 716-683-2112
Fax: 716-683-2134
www.smeschool.com



UPON THIS HILL,
WE DO GOD'S WILL



SPIRIT WEAR

Please use the link below to complete your purchase:

<https://sme-spirit-wear.cheddarup.com>

Once the payment is received, I will send the shirts home with your student or contact you to arrange pick up later this week/early next week.

PILLAR SHIRTS

Pillar shirts will be available for ordering on a monthly basis! All orders placed within the month-long period will be processed by All-Stars.

Please use the link below to place your order:
<https://all-stars.printavo.com/merch/crest-of-st--mary-s-webstore2025>

UNIFORM ORDERS

Uniforms will be available for ordering on a monthly basis! All orders placed within the month-long period will be processed by All-Stars.

Please click the link below to place your order :)

<https://all-stars.printavo.com/merch/stmary-smonthly>



SPRING BOWLING LEAGUE



The Spring Bowling League will be held on
Tuesdays from 3:30 -5:00 PM at Abbott Lanes
[1840 Abbott Rd, Lackawanna, NY 14218](https://www.abbottlanes.com)

Dates: **March 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th, April 1st.**

The Championship match will be held on
Saturday, April 5th @ Classic Lanes
1840 Military Road, Kenmore, NY

Championship is limited to grades 5/6 and 7/8



Please fill out this interest form if your child is interested in Bowling.
Open from Pre K-8th graders.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScwbpC717->

NURSES MESSAGE

Please take a moment to review this months
Nurse Notes attached electronically today!

YEARBOOKS

Don't Delay... Order Your SME Yearbook Today!

SME is growing and so is the yearbook...
The yearbook is now 44 pages of full-color!

- ◇ On Sale from **February 1 - March 8, 2025.**
- ◇ Yearbook Sales will be online ONLY. **Cost: \$20**
- ◇ All SME students in PreK3-8th grade will be included in the yearbook
- ◇ Yearbooks will be distributed in June

Please direct any questions to Mrs. Pesany-Au at
yearbook@smeschool.com

To order a yearbook visit:
www.inter-state.com/order
enter code: **92391T**
Or use the QR Code on the attached flyer

VALENTINES FOR VETERANS

Join us in spreading the love!

As Valentine's Day approaches, we have a wonderful opportunity to show appreciation and spread joy to those who have served our country.

If you would like to join us in creating heartfelt cards to brighten the day of our veterans, please send your pre-bought or handmade cards to us by February 12th!

This is a beautiful way to express gratitude and make a positive impact in our community!

MEAT RAFFLE

Get your cooler, snacks and dollar bills ready! It's **MEAT RAFFLE** time!

Join us **FEBRUARY 28 at 5:30pm** at **ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL** for our annual SME meat raffle!

Get your tickets soon, this is always a sold-out event. See the attached flyer for more info on the event and how to get your tickets.

Looking for a way to get involved and help make this event great? We are looking for donations, basket raffle donations, and volunteers! See the sign up genius link below for more info on how you can help!

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094CABAA28A3F4C25-54293551-meat#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094CABAA28A3F4C25-54293551-meat#/)



VALENTINE'S CANDY GRAM

Our 8th graders are running a
Valentine's Day Candy Gram
fundraiser to help raise money for our
8th grade class expenses.

All of the information can be found in
the flyer added on to this week's
NewsNote! Please check it out, and
thank you!

RAISE RIGHT

Updated Office Hours:

Monday 12p-2:15p
Tuesday 9a-12p
Wednesday 12p-2:15p

All online and school orders will be checked on
Fridays and go home on Monday if inventory
allows.

If you have any questions, please
email raiserright@smeschool.com.

Our team is here for you!

SME HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

NEON

GLOW IN THE DARK DANCE

NIGHTS

6-8PM

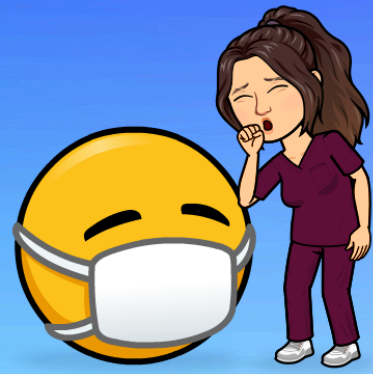
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2025

TICKETS: \$28 FOR 1 SME STUDENT & GUEST
\$35 FOR 2 OR MORE SME STUDENTS & GUEST
PRESALE ONLY THROUGH 2/5/25



THIS EVENT IS FOR ALL SME BOYS
AND THEIR SPECIAL GUEST
(MOM, AUNT, GRANDMA, SISTER, ETC).

Notes from the Nurse



With so many viruses and illnesses prevalent in our communities, I wanted to encourage parents and guardians to continue to promote the importance of good hand hygiene.

Washing your hands will not only effectively decrease the number of germs we are exposed to but also decreases the potential transfer of these germs to others.

Please encourage hand washing before meals, after using the restroom, after wiping/blowing their nose and before touching their face.

Hand sanitizer is acceptable to use when our hands are not visibly soiled and between handwashing as needed throughout the day.

All of our classrooms are equipped with hand sanitizer mounted next to the door. All students are encouraged to use it when they come into and before leaving the classroom for breaks/ specials/ lunch.

Thank you for your continued support and assistance as we strive to keep the students healthy! Please also refer to the "I need to stay home if..." handout if your child is ill.

a clean hand is a caring hand.

Did you know proper hand hygiene is the #1 way to prevent the spread of germs?

Follow these simple steps for proper hand hygiene.

Soap and water

- 1 Turn on water
- 2 Wet hands
- 3 Apply soap to palm of one hand
- 4 Scrub for 20 seconds
- 5 Rinse
- 6 Dry with paper towel
- 7 Turn off water with a clean towel

Hand sanitizer

- 1 Apply to palm of one hand
- 2 Rub over both hands
- 3 Let dry

children'shealth?

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Dara Sirianni RN, BSN

Office Hours- 9:30-1








Phone- (716)683-2112 ext 128

email- nurse@smeschool.com

Attention all parents/guardians:

Please note that if your child is not feeling well at home we ask you to use your best judgment when determining whether or not to send them to school. Illness can and will spread rapidly among younger students and it is our goal here at SME to take precautions to minimize the instances of these illnesses.

Your student **MUST STAY HOME** if any of the below items apply. This also applies anytime a student is sent home from the Health Office.

I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...						
I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
						
Temperature of 100.4 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours.	Body rash with itching or fever.	Itchy head, active head lice.	Redness, Itching, and/or "crusty" drainage from eye.	Hospital stay and/or ER Visit

I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN I AM....						
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication i.e. Tylenol, Motrin	Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours	Free from rash itching, or or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home and proof is provided to nurse.	Evaluated by my doctor and have note to return to school	Released by my medical provider to return to school.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me in the Health Office.

School Nurse,
Dara Sirianni RN, BSN



Order Your **YEARBOOK** **TODAY!**

inter-state.com/order

Use Order Code: 92391T

SCAN THE QR CODE
FOR EASY ORDERING!



Valentine's Day Candy Grams



SME'S 8TH GRADE CLASS IS HOSTING A CANDY GRAM FUNDRAISER!

Send a personalized message to your child, classmate or staff member for just **\$1.00 each**. Candy grams will include an allergy friendly lollipop and will be delivered the week of February 10th.

To purchase a candy gram, please fill out one of the forms below and send in an envelope along with cash or check made out to St. Mary's Elementary. Additional forms are attached to this week's electronic News Note. All orders are due no later than Feb 13th.

THANK YOU!

Product info: <https://a.co/d/jhuW9Pw>



**HAPPY
VALENTINE'S
DAY**

To: _____

Homeroom: _____

Message: _____

From: _____

**Happy
Valentines
Day**

To: _____

Homeroom: _____

Message: _____

From: _____

**Happy
Valentine's
Day**

To: _____

Homeroom: _____






Message: _____

From: _____







**Erie County Legislator Frank Todaro has
announced his annual**

“Valentines for Veterans”



**The Legislator is asking students to create
Valentines Day cards for area veterans.
Please join in and show veterans
that we are thinking of them
during this special holiday**



**Valentines Day cards can be handmade
by students from construction paper
and decorating materials or pre-bought
cards can be personalized by students.
The program’s goal is to deliver a card
to as many veterans and active service
members as possible!**



**To participate please contact Legislator Todaro’s office
by February 12th at (716) 681-2071 or
e-mail Frank.Todaro@erie.gov.**



BISON

CHILDREN'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Giving Parents a Choice • Giving Children a Chance

The **BISON Children's Scholarship Fund** is a private scholarship fund providing tuition assistance for low-income families throughout the 8 counties of Western New York who want to enroll their children in private K-12 schools.

BISON K-8 Scholarship Quick Facts:

- Average K-8 scholarship in 2024 of \$1,725
- The maximum award is \$3,000.
- Currently BISON has over 1,800 scholars in 77 different private schools across Western New York.
- Each family must contribute toward their child's private education.

STEP 1

Complete a pre-application online at bisonfund.org between **January 15, 2025** and **March 31, 2025**. Call BISON with questions at (716) 854-0869 ext. 1.

STEP 2

Watch for notification after the BISON Lottery is held on **April 1, 2025**. Lottery winners will receive an email with a link directing them to complete a full application to receive the scholarship. If you're not chosen, you will automatically be placed on the BISON waitlist.

STEP 3

If selected, complete the full application online. Enroll your child(ren) in the school of their choice and ask the school to complete the school commitment form.

STEP 4

Once all the steps are completed, BISON will notify you of your scholarship amount. Watch for email notices to annually renew your BISON Scholarship in February of each year and add siblings.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY AMOUNTS

Household Size	Total Income (Based on 2024 household income)
2	\$ 57,105
3	\$ 71,955
4	\$ 86,805
5	\$ 101,655
6	\$ 116,505
7	\$ 131,355
8	\$ 146,205



WHO QUALIFIES FOR A BISON K-8 SCHOLARSHIP?

Residents of the 8 counties of Western New York (WNY) with children entering K-8th grade with a total family income within the income eligibility scale on the reverse side. You may only apply for your biological or legal guardian children.

HOW DO NEW FAMILIES APPLY?

New families must complete a pre-application form electronically (online) on our website at bisonfund.org. The new family deadline is **March 31, 2025**. Preference is NOT given to early applications; however you must apply by 3/31 to be considered for the lottery. Families applying after the **March 31, 2025** deadline will be placed on our waitlist.



HOW ARE BISON SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS CHOSEN?

Scholarships are awarded using a lottery system from all submitted pre-application forms on **April 1, 2025**. Lottery winners will receive an email with a link directing them to complete a full application in order to receive the scholarship.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I WON THE LOTTERY?

All applicants will be notified of lottery results by email on **April 1, 2025**. If you're not chosen in the lottery, you can always reapply for the next school year.



I RECEIVED A SCHOLARSHIP AWARD EMAIL ... NOW WHAT?

In your award email, there will be a link to complete your full application. Click on the link and follow the application steps. **The deadline to complete the application is April 30, 2025.** Please be sure to include all your income sources including your Federal 1040 tax return, child support, business income, public assistance, food stamps, Social Security income, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation and financial assistance from family & friends. Select your school (a complete list can be found on our website) and contact the school to complete the school commitment form. After receipt of all the required documents, your scholarship will be calculated based on your household size and income, as well as tuition amount. You must renew annually to continue with BISON.



I RECEIVED NOTICE I'M ON A WAITLIST ... NOW WHAT?

Unfortunately, there are always more applicants than available funding. We keep waitlist names for the academic year hopeful that additional funding becomes available. If you are not taken off the waitlist, you will need to resubmit a pre-application next year to be considered.

WHY DO FAMILIES HAVE TO PAY PART OF THE TUITION?

One key component of educational success is parental involvement. Making a financial sacrifice is a strong incentive to becoming and remaining, involved. BISON families are required to pay a minimum of \$500 each year.



SCHOLARSHIP MONEY AVAILABLE

The BISON Children's Scholarship Fund is a tuition assistance program for families who want a private education for their children but are unsure if they can afford it.

- K-8 scholarships available for the **2025-26 school year.**
- Maximum award of **\$3,000 per student for private school**
- Maximum award of **\$500 per student for homeschool.**
- Apply at **www.bisonfund.org** or call 716.854.0869 ext. 1



ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LANCASTER, NY- *"...visible examples of Gospel living."*

Febru ary

Student lunches are **\$3.75**, and adult lunches are **\$5.50**. During this time, we ask that all lunches be prepaid with either cash or check made out to SME, in the exact amount. Any overage will be kept on account. All lunches are comprised of five components; protein, whole grain, vegetables, fruit & milk. In addition to the main entrée, there are three alternate choices offered daily; Turkey Sandwich, Yogurt Parfait, or Sun Butter/Jelly Sandwich. Milk is **\$0.50**, and may be prepaid if your student buys milk regularly. **Snack will now be served to all grades during lunchtime. No snack is ever purchased on account. Snack money must be presented at point of sale. Snacks are \$0.50-\$1.00.** If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at heerdt@smeschool.com. We appreciate your support. Liz Heerdt & Tracy Hadsall (menu subject to change)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 Lunch = \$3.75 2 Lunches = \$7.50 3 Lunches = \$11.25 4 Lunches = \$15.00 5 Lunches = \$18.75	6 Lunches = \$22.50 7 Lunches = \$26.25 8 Lunches = \$30.00 9 Lunches = \$33.75 10 Lunches = \$37.50	11 Lunches = \$41.25 12 Lunches = \$45.00 13 Lunches = \$48.75 14 Lunches = \$52.50 15 Lunches = \$56.25	16 Lunches = \$60.00 17 Lunches = \$63.75 18 Lunches = \$67.50 19 Lunches = \$71.25 20 Lunches = \$75.00	21 Lunches = \$78.75 22 Lunches = \$82.50 Cash or Check to SME Change Will Go On Acct
3 Beef Crumble Over Mashed Potatoes Veggies, Fruit & Milk	4 Chicken & Cheese Quesadilla Veggies, Fruit & Milk	5 Sloppy Joes Veggies, Fruit & Milk	6 Chicken Caesar Salad Veggies, Fruit & Milk	7 Pizza Veggies, Fruit & Milk
10 Pancakes Egg Patty Veggies, Fruit & Milk	11 Beef Taco In A Bowl Veggies, Fruit & Milk	12 Chicken Dinner Veggies, Fruit & Milk	13 Cheeseburgers Veggies, Fruit & Milk	14 Pizza Veggies, Fruit & Milk
17 *** WINTER	18 BREAK ***	19 *****	20 *** NO	21 SCHOOL ***
24 Breakfast Sandwich (Egg, Bacon & Cheese) Veggies, Fruit & Milk	25 Chicken Parmesan W/ Pasta Veggies, Fruit & Milk	26 Popcorn Chicken Veggies, Fruit & Milk	27 Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup Veggies, Fruit & Milk	28 Pizza Veggies, Fruit & Milk

Prepayment Guidelines for Student Lunches at St Mary's Elementary

1. The upcoming lunch menu is always posted on the SME Website by the last Wednesday of the month. Once you look over the menu, you may decide to prepay for as many or as few lunches as you wish.
2. A check or cash may be sent with your child/children in an envelope clearly labeled with 'Name, Amount Enclosed, and Number of Lunches Paying For.'
3. The Kitchen will then record how many Prepaid Lunches are available for your student(s), and will be marked accordingly. We will track your account(s) as the lunches are used and the account is depleted.
4. Even if the account balance is at zero, no child will ever go without a lunch. A Notice of Account will be sent via e-mail to indicate that the account needs to be replenished.
5. We also allow for ala carte milk to be prepaid. We will record and track daily milk purchases, just as we do for lunches. Simply send in a clearly marked envelope with your 'Name, Amount Enclosed, and Number of Milk Purchases Paying For.'
6. Any questions regarding the SME Lunch Program, contact us at Heerdt@smeschool.com, or 683-2112 extension 119 during school business hours.

Please note our daily offerings and menu options are subject to change. Our menu has become somewhat more fluid, often changing to accommodate supply chain interruptions and shortages. We have had to make several changes as deliveries have not included what was requested at the beginning of the month, when the menu was created. We do not always know when a manufacturer stops production or drops a product from their line because of demand, or lack thereof. Although these substitutions are made after the menu has been created, the daily offerings are still in keeping with the National School Lunch Program, and adhere to all standards set forth. If you have any questions or concerns, please email us at Heerdt@smeschool.com. Thank you for your support of our school lunch program! We love our Customers and appreciate their patience.

