

# NEWSLETTER

From the Office of the Principal



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CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2021

**BROTHERS OF THE SACRED HEART:** On September 30, the Brothers of the Sacred Heart will observe the 200th anniversary of their founding when the first 10 Brothers took their final vows in Lyon, France in 1821. This year's celebration is particularly significant because it is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are privileged to share this special occasion with the Brothers as they mark this momentous milestone. We will commemorate this bicentennial "Foundation Day" with a school wide Liturgy on Thursday, September 30 at 9:47 a.m.

## SPECIAL SCHEDULES:

**Thursday, September 9:** Test Prep Schedule. Dismissal at 2:47 p.m.

**Wednesday, September 15:** Test Prep Schedule. Dismissal at 2:47 p.m.

**Monday, September 20:** Student Mentoring Schedule. Dismissal at 2:47 p.m.

**Friday, September 24:** Test Prep Schedule. Dismissal at 2:47 p.m.

**Tuesday, September 28:** Test Prep Schedule. Dismissal at 2:47 p.m.

**Thursday, September 30:** Foundation Day Celebration. Dismissal at 2:47 p.m.

[CHS Calendar](#)

**SCHOOL CANCELLATION AND MAKE-UP DAYS:** As we have already experienced this school year, in case of a general emergency in which school may be called off due to dangerous weather or other circumstances, CHS will usually follow the action taken by the East Baton Rouge Parish public high schools. Students and parents should use radio or TV news reports concerning whether or not

schools will be open. There may be instances when CHS will make a decision to deviate from the EBR schedule depending on our own unique circumstances. In all instances, CHS will communicate information through our text messaging system, school email, social media, or through voice mail, and will be posted on the Catholic High website.

**COURSE FEES:** The fee for students enrolled in our Band courses is \$185.00. An explanation of the band fee is on page 53 of the [2021-2022 Student Handbook](#). The fee for Advanced Placement courses is \$95.00. All course fees are billed with your regular tuition payment or are billed on October 15, with the exception of freshmen taking the AP U.S. Government and Politics test. Freshmen parents will be billed in February for this test.

**"GUILTY AT AN AGE" PRESENTATIONS:** Continuing a program that was formerly known as "Parent to Parent," Catholic High School is once again hosting a presentation for all parents of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to discuss a broad range of topics from substance abuse, to social media and other addictive behaviors. Guest speakers will not only educate but will provide strategies for parents to help children navigate the world around them. Attendance is mandatory for at least one parent of all 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. While parents of sophomores are not required to attend a presentation, sophomore parents are invited to attend since this program was not available last year due to COVID. The available dates for this mandatory meeting are September 14<sup>th</sup>, October 13<sup>th</sup> and November 17<sup>th</sup>. All 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade parents will receive an email from Jared Cavalier, assistant principal for discipline, with further information.

**SENIOR EXAMS AND EXEMPTIONS:** Only seniors may be exempt from final exams so it is important for seniors to begin the school year with an end goal in mind,

including exemption from final exams. The exemption policy for seniors is as follows: for full year courses, a student who has a first semester A, and a third and fourth quarter A, is exempt from the final exam. In addition, seniors can be exempt from their semester senior religion course exam in either semester. Students must have an A for the first quarter and an A going into the final exam of the given semester religion course.

Out of fairness to students, a student who qualifies to be exempt from an exam should know by the beginning of “dead days” that he is exempt from the exam. Mid-term exams are December 14-17. December 13 is classified as a “dead day,” which means that no assignments are due and no tests, quizzes or homework are to be given. Seniors in first semester senior religion classes should know no later than Wednesday, December 8 if they are exempt from the exam.

**STANDARDIZED TESTING:** All students in grades 8 through 10 will take standardized tests on October 12. 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will take their standardized test on October 13.

The pre-ACT test will be administered to grades 8 through 10 on October 12. Students must attend school for this testing. Testing will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and will conclude for most students at 11:00 a.m.

All students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and certain 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who qualify, will take the PSAT on October 13. This test is used to determine National Merit and National Achievement Semifinalists. Testing will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and will conclude for most students at 11:25 a.m.

Regular classes are not held during testing days.

**Testing Days Schedule:**

Monday, October 11: No school for students in grades 8, 9, 10, and 11. Seniors are on their mandatory closed retreat on this day.

Tuesday, October 12: Students in grades 8, 9, and 10 will take the pre-ACT. No school for juniors.

Wednesday, October 13: Juniors will take the PSAT. No school for grades 8, 9, and 10 (with the exception of those students taking the PSAT).

As part of our standardized test preparation program, all students are participating in five test prep classes prior to the October testing. The dates are indicated on our school calendar, which can be found on our website. Mrs. Christy Kessler, assistant principal for instruction, coordinates this program. During these sessions students

will practice test questions, review content and learn test-taking strategies. Students may access these resources at any time by going to the Standardized Test Prep Moodle Page.

Our standardized test prep program will resume in the second semester in advance of our spring testing. More information about those sessions will be given as the date approaches.

I highly encourage you to talk with your son about his test prep class and be informed about your son’s progress as he prepares to take the tests in October.

Standardized tests are very important for your son and very important for our school. While test scores do not drive instruction, they do help determine the course of action for your son’s academic success. Each of your son’s teachers receives the results of his tests and uses these scores to determine what skills he needs in order to be prepared for college. Mrs. Kessler also uses the results to individualize future test preparation classes for your son.

Please encourage your son to take these tests seriously and be proactive in analyzing his scores. You should see an increase in his individual subject area scores from year to year. We view standardized testing as one more opportunity to partner with you in your son’s education.

The specific daily testing schedule will be posted in the October *Newsletter*. Please see page 48 of the [2021-2022 Student Handbook](#) for additional testing information. Results of these tests will be given to you later in the school year through your son. Please contact our testing coordinator, Ms. Shelley Vance: [svance@catholichigh.org](mailto:svance@catholichigh.org) if you have any questions.

**CELLULAR TELEPHONES:** The school recognizes the convenience, logistical, and safety advantages of cellular phones. A student may have a cell phone in his possession while on campus, but it must remain turned off and be kept stowed away throughout the academic day (7:30 a.m. until 2:47 p.m.). Before 7:30 a.m. and after 2:47 p.m., a cell phone may be used only outside of buildings. Students are not allowed to use their cell phone inside of the buildings. Violations of this policy may result in confiscation of the cell phone and/or other corrective action. Confiscated cell phones are subject to search by the assistant principal for discipline. Please see the Student Handbook for further policies regarding cell phones. If a student needs to make a phone call during the academic day, it must be made through the assistant principal's office or main office.

**STUDENT CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES:** It is important to remember that school attendance is a priority and students should only check out in the event of illness or for appointments that absolutely cannot be scheduled after school hours. Parents should make every effort to schedule appointments that do not take students out during the school day.

On those rare occasions when a student does need to check out, he should bring a note the morning of the appointment. The attendance secretary will give the student a note to leave class at the designated time and report to the assistant principals' office to sign out.

If an unforeseen and necessary circumstance occurs and a student must check out and he did not know about it, parents must call the school in advance. This situation should only occur in the rarest of circumstances. Please do not just show up at school to check a student out. It is also important to remember that not all absences are excused and consequences may be given to a student in those circumstances. Please consult the *Student Handbook* for further details. Thank you for your help in this important matter.

**STUDENTS ON CAMPUS:** The [2021-2022 Student Handbook](#) (page 24) addresses when students may and may not leave campus: "From the time he arrives until the end of his last scheduled class period, a student must remain on campus. The assistant principal for discipline is the only person who can give a student permission to leave campus or to enter a restricted area." Students having 8th period unassigned may leave school following their 7th period class and return later to participate in extracurricular activities. However, students are not allowed to linger in the parking lots. Students with 1<sup>st</sup> period unassigned are allowed to arrive to school in time for 2<sup>nd</sup> period. Special schedule days should be noted so that unassigned 1<sup>st</sup> period students are not late for school.

In addition, once a student leaves the CHS campus, Catholic High School is no longer responsible for a student's safety. Students who walk in the neighborhood to get dropped off or meet a ride are no longer under our supervision and are responsible for their own safety. We highly discourage such action because of the volume of traffic on neighborhood streets after school and ask that parents not engage in such dangerous behavior. We encourage all rides to use the carpool lines. They move quickly once school is dismissed and are the safest point of drop-off and pick-up for your son.

**STUDENTS AFTER SCHOOL:** Because of extracurricular activities or carpool arrangements, some students are not picked up until after 6 p.m. Students who stay on campus after school occasionally walk to area merchants between the end of school and the start of practice or pickup time. Because their academic day has ended, students are free to do so. The school is unable to provide any sort of supervision of a student once he leaves the campus. If you are uncomfortable with your son leaving campus after school, please discuss this matter with him.

Snacks are available for purchase in the Student Union every day after school until approximately 3:15 and our library is open until 4 p.m. Please encourage your son to make use of these resources rather than leave campus.

Students not involved in extracurricular activities who stay on campus after school in the mall or in the front of school to wait for rides are welcome to do so, but adult supervision is not on campus after 4:00 p.m. After 4:00, we ask all students to wait inside the building until their ride arrives and not outside in front of the school or outside in the union circle. For those students participating in extracurricular activities, a coach or moderator should always supervise students during pick-up.

**ACADEMIC CONVOCATION:** This year's Academic Convocation is scheduled for Wednesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>. We will hold two ceremonies in the CHS Gym in order to limit capacity due to COVID concerns. Students whose last names begin with A-K will be recognized at 4:30 p.m. Students whose last names begin with L-Z will be recognized at 6:00 p.m. We expect each ceremony to last less than an hour. We ask that only parents attend this ceremony to allow for proper distancing between family groups. The next day, September 30<sup>th</sup>, is a no assessment day which means that no assignments are due, and no tests, quizzes or homework are given so that that students can celebrate their accomplishments with their families.

At this convocation, we honor students who had a weighted cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher at the end of the 2020-2021 school year at CHS. Each young man being honored will receive a certificate and a pin recognizing his achievement. Also recognized are students who placed on the National Latin Exam, AP Scholars, ACT 30+ Club, and students being recognized as National Merit Semifinalists and Commended students. Catholic High School Foundation scholarships will be awarded as well.

Qualifying students and their parents will receive an email of invitation by September 10 from Events Coordinator, Tracy Ducote. If you did not receive an email and feel your son should be included, please contact Ms. Ducote at [tducote@catholichigh.org](mailto:tducote@catholichigh.org).

**DUPLICATE MAILINGS:** Information addressed and mailed home to students is sent to the address in our database designated as the student's primary address. We do make an effort to send information to parents who do not reside with their son(s). If you are currently not receiving mailings and would like such information to be sent to you as well, please email Stephanie Potter, registrar, at [spotter@catholichigh.org](mailto:spotter@catholichigh.org).

**HOMECOMING:** The administration of CHS is still trying to determine the feasibility of hosting a homecoming dance for our students. One certainty is that the dance will not be held in an indoor facility. While we want our students to enjoy this typical high school event, the health safety of our students and their dates as it relates to COVID must be the primary consideration. The Homecoming Dance is scheduled for Saturday, October 23. More information about homecoming plans will be communicated as soon as final decisions are made.

**UNDERAGE SUBSTANCE USE:** With the re-emergence of football season, and LSU tailgating in particular, I ask that you have a discussion with your son about the dangers of drinking alcohol and the use of other substances. These types of social events lead to more opportunities for our students to engage in such behavior. Not only is it illegal and a violation of Catholic High School's 24-7-52 policy, but such actions are dangerous and lead to other destructive behaviors. In addition, I cannot stress enough that parents should never provide alcohol or other substances for their sons and his friends. This sends a confusing message to students and puts them in an unwinnable situation of having to choose between a parent's leniency and school expectations. Please help your sons make good decisions.

**NON - DISCRIMINATORY POLICY:** Catholic High School, Inc., is a Louisiana corporation doing business as Catholic High School. Catholic High School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on any national, ethnic or religious basis in administration of the school's education policies, financial-assistance programs, athletics or any other school-administered activities.