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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

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Sunday, February 4, 2024

Weekly Update: February 4, 2024 Catholic Schools Week Roundup

Catholic Schools Week Roundup

Monday

The Episcopal Vicar for the Southern Region of the Archdiocese of Boston, Fr. Robert Connors celebrated a beautiful Mass dedicated to the common mission of all Catholic schools in the United States. Our ever-expanding Liturgical Choir teamed again with the Life Teen Band from St. Mary's in Hanover to provide exceptional music that invited our whole school to participate.

Per Catholic Schools Week tradition, Fr. Connors gave our students a day off school, a "Bishops Day for the Bishops." Dr. V. announced after Mass the Bishops Day would be Monday, February 26, extending February Vacation by one day.

After Mass, three students were honored for exemplifying the core values of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, our founding teaching order – Simplicity, Charity, and Humility. The winners were Senior Kevin Eloi, Sophomore Andrea Zhao, and Eighth Grader Matt Freccero. Lastly, we also announced the winner of this year's Pelican Award, given to the Faculty/Staff member who also best represents the Sisters on our campus. This year's recipient went to Mrs. Brett Marcotte, who has held numerous roles in our school including Director of Admissions and a parent of three who attended AWHs.

Tuesday

Our 7th and 8th Grade has a special Pajamas Dress Down Day. They competed in a series of special games and competitions. As Catholic Schools Week often functions as the Spirit Week for our PreK-8 partner schools, we focus many of our activities on these grades in solidarity. Our big Spirit Week starts March 11, and that will be spectacular.

Wednesday

Aside from Mass, the highlight of Catholic Schools Week for our community was Rachel's Challenge. The presentation was simply spellbinding and palpably moved students of all grade levels to start a chain reaction of kindness. We have not had as effective a guest presentation in years at our school. In the afternoon, the organization trained about 100 students on how to create a "Friends of Rachel" club to build off the themes of the talk and embed them in our culture.

Rachel tried to build on the themes of the talk and embed them in our culture.

The Five Challenges from Rachel are:

1. Look for the Best in Others
2. Dream Big
3. Choose Positive Influences
4. Speak with Kindness
5. Start your own Chain Reaction

Thank you to our families who attended the evening presentation.

Thursday

To conclude Catholic Schools Week, we had a Blue and Gold Spirit Dress Down Day. Our 7th and 8th Graders went on their Day of Service traveling to sites throughout the region to perform Community Service and then they came back to campus and shared their experiences.



**Our Catholic Schools Week Award winners with Mr. Gilpin, Dr. V, and Fr. Connors.
From L to R: Mrs. Marcotte, Andrea Zhao '26, Kevin Eloi '24, Matt Freccero '28.**

Parent Teacher Conferences – February 9

Our Winter Parent Teacher Conferences are this Friday, February 9 during the school day. Coach K sent out an email with details on the event. To sign up for a conference, please go to https://ptcfast.com/schools/Archbishop_Williams_High_School_2. Step-by-step instructions for registering for conferences can be found [here](#). Families can sign up for conferences until Thursday, February 8, at midnight.

These conferences are not only an excellent opportunity to discuss current academic performance, but to talk about course placement for next year.

Athletics Honors

Our Winter Sports teams are firing on all cylinders right now. Boys Hockey, Girls Track, and Boys Basketball are all back-to-back CCL Champions. The basketball team earned these honors Friday night with a stirring home victory over St. Mary's, which followed a trouncing of Cardinal Spellman away last Friday.

On Saturday, the Swim Team had a strong performance at the CCL Championships. Sophomore Jack Dexter set a school record in winning the 50m and brought home the 100m crown as well. Junior Gianna Guerriero won the 50m. Senior Andy Pan set a school record in taking third in the 100 breaststroke. The Boys 400m freestyle relay and the Girls 200m freestyle relay took the CCL title as well, with the Girls' time sending them to States.

Jack, Gianna, freshman Saraellen Matthewson and senior captain Evan O'Brien all qualified for States or Sectionals at the meet.

Boys Hockey celebrated its Senior Night Saturday against Bishop Fenwick with a 10-0 thrashing of the Crusaders to complete an undefeated CCL season. Despite losing a heartbreaker to Pope Francis in overtime last Saturday, our Bishops remain the No. 2 team in the MIAA power rankings for Division 1. Our hockey programs (Boys and Girls) are our only D-1 teams in the school.

Congratulations New Bishops

On Friday, we invited 118 students to become Bishops next year as part of a record priority application season. This was one of the most competitive applicant pools that we have seen, reflected in our acceptance rate. There is a welcome reception for them on Thursday. If you know someone who has been accepted, we are counting on you to share how special our school community is.

Last week, our regular application deadline also passed, and we are excited to report that when all the records arrive, we will have more completed applications for this deadline than our banner year last year – which included an unexpected (and sad) influx from Catholic schools that closed.



Our Students sent a special thank you to the Catholic Schools Foundation this week, which supports many of our Bishops.

New Bishops Block Assignments

With the start of the third quarter, all students signed up for new Bishops Block assignments. We continue to push students into clubs and activities, limiting opportunities for recreational spaces or an extra study hall. One of the core goals of Bishops Block is to help our students become more well-rounded through participation in clubs and activities. Please discuss with your child how they are using Bishops Block – assignments are visible on Blackbaud.

Staff Development Days

We have had a couple of extra staff development days lately with our next one on Friday, March 8. During these days, our faculty have been working on aligning our curriculum Grades 7-12 and delving deeper into effective instructional practices. They have been highly productive, and we have seen immediate impact in our classrooms. We appreciate everyone's understanding and flexibility.

Upcoming Calendar

- Friday, 2/9 - Winter Parent Teacher Conferences
- Wednesday, 2/14 - Ash Wednesday Liturgy, Mass Dress
- Thursday, 2/15 - Valentine's Day Dress Down, Winter Pep Rally
- Friday, 2/16 - Start of February Vacation
- Monday, 2/26 - "Bishops Holiday" - No School
- Friday, 3/8 - No School, Professional Development
- Friday 3/8 and Saturday 3/9 - The Little Mermaid

And Lastly: A Reminder on Our Common Catholic School Mission

Catholic Schools Week is a powerful reminder that all of us engaged in Catholic education have a sacred common mission to "teach as Jesus did," caring for the whole child and bringing each member of our community closer to Christ. At the same time, our fellow Catholic schools are often our fiercest rivals, competing in many different arenas.

We remind our students that they are always representing Archbishop Williams, no more so then when we travel to our peer Catholic schools. We hold our students to high standards and there are severe consequences when we fail to represent our school with class, treating our rivals with the respect they deserve.

On Wednesday, our CCL Champion Boys Basketball team will host Cardinal Spellman. It will be Senior Night for our Bishops and we want a good crowd that cheers passionately and positively for our student-athletes. Anything derogatory towards Spellman, especially directed at individual players or members of their fan section, will result in students being ejected from the game and, at a minimum, banned from future sporting events.





Ms. Tucker from Rachel's Challenge gave a powerful message on creating a chain reaction of kindness and how small acts can have a major difference on the lives of your fellow students.

As always, if there is anything we can do to better serve you or your student, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you for being part of the Archbishop Williams family!

Pax,

***Dr. V.
Michael R. Volonnino, Ph.D.
Principal***

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Archbishop Williams is an independent, Catholic, college preparatory Grade 7-12 school. Driven by the love of Christ, in the tradition of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, we integrate learning with faith. We endeavor to educate young men and women spiritually, intellectually, ethically, and physically. We strive to graduate socially aware, morally responsible citizens prepared to succeed and to serve their local and global communities.



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