



## **CARDINAL WEEKLY**

*News for the Week of February 22, 2024*

### **All School**

#### **Cardinella Tickets Now on Sale!**

**[Click here to buy tickets for Cardinella](#)**, St. John's annual school benefit, held Saturday, March 16. You won't want to miss out on the community-wide fellowship event of the year! (Special thanks to Russ Hennings with Moonbeam Studios for helping to create this special highlight video.)

#### **From the Head of School: A Note About Job Postings**

As we begin to prepare for the 2024–25 school year, one of our highest priorities is to ensure that we have the very best employees serving at St. John's. Due to the rhythm of the school year, late winter/early spring is a normal time in which teachers, teacher assistants, and instructional aides may begin thinking about making changes for the next school year. This is also when faculty and staff begin notifying their school of anticipated moves, retirements, and other situations that would prevent them from returning in the fall.

While we are blessed with many talented employees, each year brings changes due to a variety of personal circumstances. It is St. John's highest priority to ensure that we have a pool of highly qualified candidates from which to hire if and when positions become available.

Because of this, St. John's—like most other schools—will soon begin posting job opportunities for division teachers, teacher assistants, and instructional aides on our website. I wanted to tell you about this now so that you know our purpose behind these job postings—not because specific teachers are leaving, but to have a deep candidate pool ready in case we need to fill a position for next year. Once an employee does give the school notification of any change in status, we would, of course, post a specific position need at that time.

Parents can be a great resource in helping us recruit the very best employees. If you know of an excellent teacher, we would truly appreciate you connecting them with us or directing them to the SJES website.

Thank you for your support!

Warmly,

Steve Lovejoy, MEd  
Head of School

### **Registration for Summer Programming Opens in March**

Planning for St. John's summer programming is underway, and registration will open in March. Keep an eye on *Cardinal Weekly* for additional details, which will be available soon!

### **St. John's Athletics Update**

Congratulations to St. John's 7/8 Basketball Team for winning third place in the PAL Championship tournament last week—Go Cardinals!

### **Photos Now Available for Grandparents & Special Friends Day**

Thank you to all our grandparents and special guests for attending Grandparents & Special Friends Day last week! If you stopped by the photo booth, please [click here to view and order your photos](#).

### **Yearbook Dedication Pages: Order a Personalized Ad for Your Student Today**

You've only got a few weeks left to give your student a special "shout-out" in the yearbook with a personalized ad! [Click here](#) for more information. With questions, please [email Beth Sarachman](#) in the Middle Division.

## **Important Upcoming Dates**

### **Early Childhood Division**

#### **Thursday, February 22**

- *Parent-Teacher Conference Sign-ups Open Today*

#### **Friday, February 23**

- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *Student Store Open: 7:45 a.m.—12:30 p.m.*

#### **Friday, March 1**

- *Minimum Day: Dismissal at 11:45 a.m.*
- *End of Second Trimester*
- *Spirit Wear Friday*

#### **Thursday, March 7**

- *Parent-Teacher Conferences: Sign-ups open February 22*

## Friday, March 8

- *Parent-Teacher Conferences*: Sign-ups open February 22

## Saturday, March 16

- *Cardinella*: Tickets to St. John's annual school benefit go on sale soon

## Elementary Division

### Thursday, February 22

- *Parent-Teacher Conference Sign-ups Open Today*

### Friday, February 23

- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *Student Store Open*: 7:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

### Monday, February 26

- *Formal Uniform Day for K–8*
- *Weekly Flag-Raising Ceremony*: 8:00 a.m. by the flagpole; parents/guardians welcome

### Wednesday, February 28

- *Dress Rehearsal for ED Variety Show*: 11:30 a.m.

### Thursday, February 29

- *Dress Rehearsal for ED Variety Show*: 11:30 a.m.

### Friday, March 1

- *Minimum Day*: Dismissal at 12:00 p.m.
- *After-School Extended Care Available From Dismissal to 5:00 p.m.*: [Click here to register](#)
- *End of Second Trimester*
- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *ED Variety Show*: 10:15 a.m. in the Cardinal Gym; please arrive 15 minutes early to check in

### Thursday, March 7

- *Parent-Teacher Conferences*: Sign-ups open February 22
- *Extra-Day Extended Care Available From 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.*: [Click here to register](#)

## Friday, March 8

- *Parent-Teacher Conferences:* Sign-ups open February 22
- *Extra-Day Extended Care Available From 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.:* [Click here to register](#)

## Saturday, March 16

- *Cardinella:* Tickets to St. John's annual school benefit go on sale soon

## Middle Division

### Thursday, February 22

- *Student-Led Conference Sign-ups Open Today*
- *Spring Sports Tryouts*
  - Coed 5/6 Soccer: 3:15–4:40 p.m. on Reuland Field
  - Boys 5/6 Volleyball: 3:15–4:30 p.m. in Cardinal Gym

### Friday, February 23

- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *Student Store Open:* 7:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- *MD Spring Musical Rehearsal:* 3:15–6:00 p.m.

### Monday, February 26

- *Formal Uniform Day for K–8*

### Tuesday, February 27

- *Spring Sports Awards:* 3:15 p.m. in Cardinal Gym

### Friday, March 1

- *Minimum Day:* MD dismissal at 12:15 p.m.
- *After-School Extended Care Available From Dismissal to 5:00 p.m.:* [Click here to register](#)
- *End of Second Trimester*
- *Spirit Wear Friday*
- *MD Spring Musical Rehearsal:* 1:00–4:00 p.m.

### Thursday, March 7

- *No School for Students*
- *Extra-Day Extended Care Available From 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.:* [Click here to register](#)
- *Student-Led Conferences:* Sign-ups open February 22

## Friday, March 8

- *No School for Students*
- *Extra-Day Extended Care Available From 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.: [Click here to register](#)*
- *Student-Led Conferences: Sign-ups open February 22*
- *MD Spring Musical Rehearsal: 2:00–5:00 p.m.*

## Friday, March 15

- *MD Spring Musical Rehearsal: 3:15–6:00 p.m.*

## Saturday, March 16

- *Cardinella: Tickets to St. John's annual school benefit go on sale soon*

## Early Childhood Division



***Executive-Level Exploration: Preschool students learned how presidential elections work during Presidents' Week!***

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### **From the Interim Division Principal**

This week is Presidents' Week in the Early Childhood Division. This was the optimal time for Mrs. Townsend's Preschool class to learn about how a president is elected.

Two candidates rose to the occasion—a farmer and a duck. The children got to know them better and decided it was time to vote. Ballots were passed out and counted, and the duck won! Everyone cheered for the new president. They celebrated by decorating hats and parading throughout the ECD to patriotic music.

What a delightful way to learn about American presidents!

Warm regards,

Carole Magaldi  
Interim Early Childhood Division Principal

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences: Sign Up Today!**

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday, March 7, and Friday, March 8.

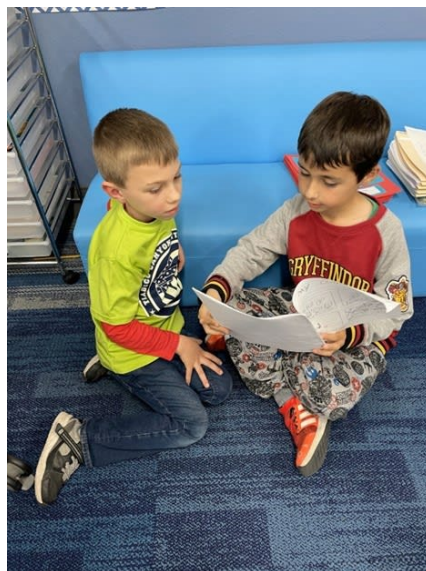
- Please [click here](#) to schedule your conference through SignUpGenius.
- Once you sign up, you will receive an email confirming your selected time, in addition to an email reminder five days before your conference.
- Conference sign-ups will close on Sunday, March 3.
- If you have any questions about conference sign-ups, please [email Susan Gomez](#).

## **Elementary Division**

### **From the Division Principal**

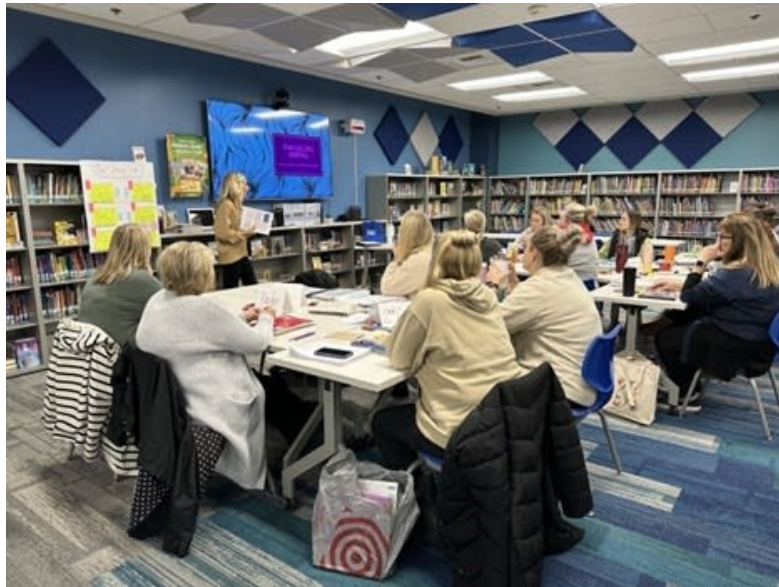
Learning is a social activity. Although there are certainly times during the day when classrooms are quiet—and students are working individually—quite often there is a “buzz” in St. John’s learning environments. As I visit our students at work, it is fascinating to see how they interact with each other: sometimes they are commenting on each other’s ideas, sometimes they are providing peer feedback, and sometimes they are simply commending each other. No matter what, though, they are learning together.

As we launch Writers Workshop K–5, one particular component of this approach to developing young authors is the idea of “writing partners.” In the picture below, a first-grade writer is sharing his writing with a kindergarten buddy. Not only are these students actively partnered with each other in order to share work, but our first graders are serving as role models while our younger students aspire to develop skills like their older partners.



Classroom partnerships allow this type of exchange to occur. Partnering also teaches our students that, as authors, it is essential to consider your audience. When our Cardinals are partnered with each other frequently, they are able to see and hear how their peers are growing. They are also able to write to each other as their “audience.” Rather than always turning in work to their teacher (or parents), students in partnerships have the exciting opportunity to interact with each other. After all, who better to appreciate their topics of interest than their very own friends and classmates?

On Tuesday, our teachers participated in a similar exercise. Under the direction of First-Grade Teacher Ms. McLennan, faculty in kindergarten through fifth grade worked together by grade levels to examine their students’ writing (see picture below). By going through a protocol, teachers were able to review rubrics, sort students’ writing into different groups, individually evaluate the writing against a rubric, and then discuss how each of them arrived at conclusions. This process of calibrating students’ writing was a learning experience—one that will better prepare us to address the strengths and support the growth of our student writers.



As we continue our dive into Writers Workshop, I encourage parents to speak to their children about their writing lives. Ask questions about their “writing toolkit,” particularly the strategies that they are learning. As they show their writing to you, ask them to explain what they are doing as writers. Remember, it’s not just the topic of their writing that matters, but also the writing process. To sum up an important idea, we teach the “writer,” not just the “writing.”

Warmly,

Ryan Bourke  
Elementary Division Principal

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences: Sign Up Today!**

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday, March 7, and Friday, March 8.

- Please click on the pertinent link below to schedule your conference through SignUpGenius:
  - [Kindergarten, First-Grade, and Second-Grade Sign-ups](#)
  - [Third-Grade, Fourth-Grade, and Fifth-Grade Sign-ups](#)
- Once you sign up, you will receive an email confirming your selected time, in addition to an email reminder five days before your conference.
- Conference sign-ups will close on Sunday, March 3.
- Extra-Day Extended Care is available on both days. To register your K–8 student for Extra-Day Extended Care, please [click here](#).
- If you have any questions about conference sign-ups, please [email Kimberly Cahuantzi](#).

### **Sign Up for K-8 Extended Care on March 1**

**Friday, March 1, is a Minimum Day**, so there is no school for students in the afternoon. However, **After-School Extended Care is available on this day from dismissal to 5:00 p.m.** To register your K–8 student for After-School Extended Care, please [click here](#).

### **Athletics: Track & Field Registration Now Open for K-8**

Registration is now open for the 2024 SJES Track & Field team! All students in K-8 are eligible to participate. To register, please [click here](#).

## **Middle Division**

### **From the Division Principal**

What is a podcast? It is an audio file created by the host to inform, inspire, and engage a target audience. It was fantastic to see our own Middle Division students utilizing podcast creation as an innovative, project-based learning experience in sixth-grade English.

The students began the process by listening to “The Unexplainable Disappearance of Mars Patel,” an award-winning, scripted podcast created for middle school students by other middle school students. During the listening phase of the project, students took notes, predicted, summarized, and visualized each episode. Next came the interactive portion of the project, where the students used their own mental pictures to bring key elements of the podcast to life by building a temporary shelter and a mini catapult. The end goal was to help these future podcast creators develop critical-thinking skills, understand the key elements of a podcast, and learn how to draw the listener in.

Now armed with thorough knowledge of what it takes to create a good podcast, students used their creativity to brainstorm their own ideas. The emphasis on planning, scriptwriting, and understanding the different components of a podcast—including the introduction, core content, and conclusion—was crucial for developing effective communication skills.

After they settled on a topic, students took on the task of writing their own scripts so that they were fully prepared for the podcast-recording process. Key considerations during the recording process included identifying their target audience and incorporating a theme song, sound



effects, and even a message from a sponsor. This mirrored the real-world aspects of podcast production.

The culminating step was the use of the platform Flipgrid to record their own three-to-five-minute podcasts, and then showcasing their work to their peers. Our sixth graders took pride in their podcasts, and enjoyed listening to their classmates' creations. Podcast topics were diverse, and included "Island Discovery Institute," "Clipper Nation," "All About Dogs," "Perfect Chocolate Chip Cookies," "All Things Aviation," and "January 2024 Hotline News." As you can see, there was quite a range of titles, and the podcasts reflected students' personal interests while allowing for a wide variety of content.

Who knows—we may have a future podcast creator in the Middle Division, and this may be the spark they needed to pursue their passion!

Warm regards,

Sheryll Grogan  
Middle Division Principal

### **Parent-Student-Advisor Conferences: Sign Up Today!**

Parent-Student-Advisor Conferences will be held on Thursday, March 7, and Friday, March 8.

- Please click on the pertinent link below to schedule your conference through SignUpGenius:
  - [Grade 6 Sign-ups](#)
  - [Grade 7 Sign-ups](#)
  - [Grade 8 Sign-ups](#)
- Once you sign up, you will receive an email confirming your selected time, in addition to an email reminder five days before your conference.
- **Please note that students are required to attend the conference.**
- Extra-Day Extended Care is available on both days. To register your K–8 student for Extra-Day Extended Care, please [click here](#).
- If you have any questions about conference sign-ups, please [email Rhiannon Overmire](#).

### **Sign Up for K-8 Extended Care on March 1**

**Friday, March 1, is a Minimum Day**, so there is no school for students in the afternoon. However, **After-School Extended Care is available on this day from dismissal to 5:00 p.m.** To register your K–8 student for After-School Extended Care, please [click here](#).

### **Track & Field Registration Now Open for K-8**

Registration is now open for the 2024 SJES Track & Field team! All students in K-8 are eligible to participate. To register, please [click here](#).

### **Athletics: Spring Sports Tryouts Continue This Afternoon**

Tryouts for spring sports continue this afternoon—Thursday, February 22:

- *Coed 5/6 Soccer*: 3:15–4:40 p.m.
- *Boys 5/6 Volleyball*: 3:15–4:30 p.m.

## **Church**

### **Opportunity for Students to Sing in Church This Sunday**

All students are invited to perform with Lisa Naulls at St. Francis Episcopal Church's 10:00 a.m. Worship Service this **Sunday, February 25**. Students should wear their Formal Uniform. If interested, please [email Mrs. Naulls](#).

### **Save the Date: Vacation Bible School Is June 17-21**

Save the Date for Scuba Vacation Bible School the week of June 17–21! Kids will dive deep into an amazing undersea adventure where they'll experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God.

- At Scuba VBS, kids will be immersed in the Word of God and discover what living water is really all about! Each day, kids will launch into field-tested rotations that reinforce relevant Bible points and immerse kids in new adventures.
- Registration will open in early April.
- With questions, please [email Chrissy Hennings](#).

We hope to see you all there!