



# HARRISBURG CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY NEWS

## Cathedral Campus

212 State St., Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717-234-3797

[www.hbgcathelem.org](http://www.hbgcathelem.org)

## Holy Family Campus

555 S. 25th St., Harrisburg, PA 17104  
717-232-2551

May 2022



## A Change in School Leadership

There are many changes taking place at Harrisburg Catholic Elementary, and it's not just the changing façade of the Cathedral Campus. In February, Mr. Johnnie Hicks, 6th Grade homeroom teacher and middle school Social Studies teacher, left Harrisburg Catholic to take a job in a public school. Mr. Dave Rushinski, principal and former teacher, returned to the classroom to take Mr. Hicks' place. After much soul-searching and many family discussions, Mr. Rushinski decided that effective next school year, he will return to the classroom full time and no longer be principal.

We wish Mr. Rushinski well with these changes and thank him for his many years of service as HCE principal. We are happy he is remaining at Harrisburg Catholic Elementary.



At the school-wide Mass on May 26, students and faculty thanked Mr. Rushinski for his time as principal. Sister Mary Thomas organized a heartfelt ceremony of gratitude, with the singing of special songs and a list of A to Z what Mr. Rushinski means to our students.

Best wishes and thank you Mr. Rushinski!

*Thanks to Lisa Reisteter for these photos.*

## 6th Grade Makes Travel Guides

Sixth grade has been extremely busy these past few months. We have completed reading 2 novels, and have studied the continents of Australia and Antarctica. Completed travel brochures for our favorite destinations in Australia and have created Google Slide presentations on European countries. We will also be completing posters with detailed information on Middle Eastern countries. Each student has spent a considerable amount of time researching historical events to write an expository essay.

As we all get ready to begin our summer vacation, we look forward to reflecting on all the great knowledge we have acquired throughout this year.

— Mr. Rushinski



Thank you to everyone who supported our fundraisers this past school year. YOU help HCE in more ways than we can say!  
Thank you!



# HARRISBURG CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY NEWS

The Kindergarten class has been learning about our universe. They have learned about all of the planets, the asteroid belt, and the difference between planets and stars. The last thing that we learned in our space unit was about gravity. The students were able to watch a music video by OK Go called Upside Down and Inside Out. In this video, the students were able to see how gravity pulls objects to Earth while zero gravity allows objects to float around freely. The students truly enjoyed being able to witness the difference. We then used various objects and balloons to demonstrate how gravity affects them.

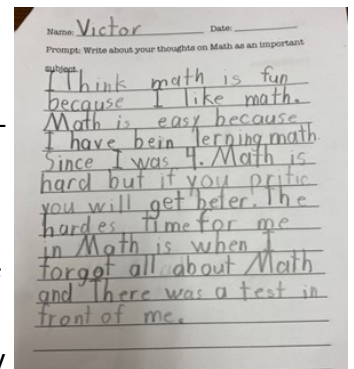
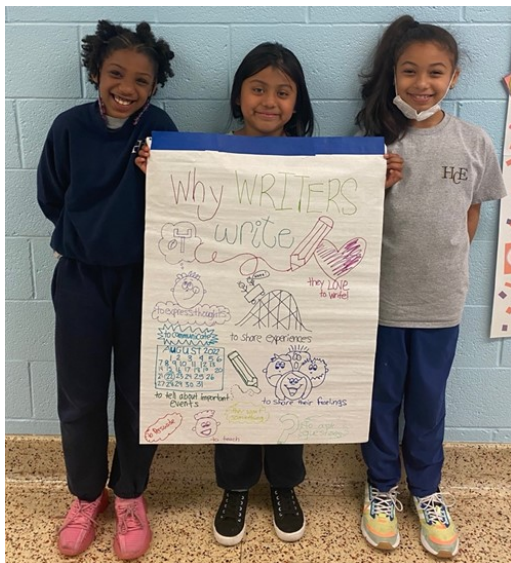
— Miss Kopacko



## Junior Writers Found in Third Grade

This month, in third grade, we are learning about the writing process. We are exploring why people write, types of stories that we can write, and how the writing process helps us to be better writers. We have written some interesting stories from living in another world to our thoughts on why math is an important subject. We have also made lists of our top ten favorite things or movies we like to watch on rainy days.

— Miss Ryan



**Congratulations** to Janice Baldwin and India Smith, Harrisburg Catholic alumnae and current Bishop McDevitt students. Both won ACT-SO awards this spring with Janice winning Gold for Poetry Writing and Performance and India winning Bronze in the same fields. HCE is always proud of our alumni. If you are HCE alumni, please reach out to us to give us your current contact information, as well as let us know of your accomplishments. Email [jbearley@hbgcathelem.org](mailto:jbearley@hbgcathelem.org) or call the Cathedral Campus at 717-234-3797.



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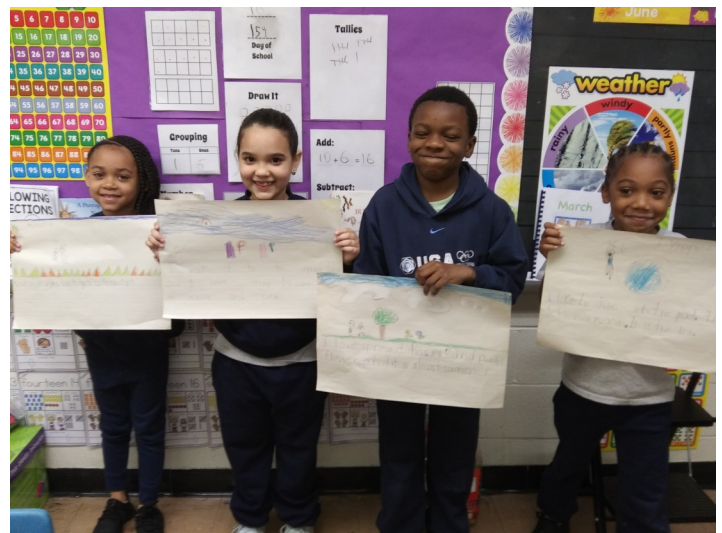
## Middle States Team Visit

Our Middle States Team visited Harrisburg Catholic virtually March 15-18. The team had a full experience of our school through the Middle States Document “Excellence by Design” prepared by our faculty and staff; Zoom sessions with our pastors, the administration, faculty, parents and students; and video clips of each of the spaces within our school.

Following the visit the team presented a report of their observations, commendations and recommendations. We have received this report and are pleased to inform you that Harrisburg Catholic met all 12 Standards set by the Middle States Commission; that there is a system of continuous planning for school improvement in place and that there is a strong commitment to follow the Action Plan of Growth and Improvement. Therefore, the team will be recommending that Harrisburg Catholic is reaccredited to the Middle States Commission for the next seven years. We are looking forward to this new part of our journey. — Sister Mary Thomas

During these most holy months, First Graders have been working hard at their writing skills. They have been busy writing sentences neatly and completely. After writing a sentence or two, they enjoy illustrating their sentences. Then, we hang them in the hallway so that the entire student body can enjoy their work.

We are also celebrating Spring by watching caterpillars grow and eventually turn into butterflies. They understand that just like Jesus had to die in order to save us, the caterpillar must die in order to become a beautiful butterfly. According to their Science Journals, the students are especially looking forward to the day that they can have a butterfly sit on their hand! — Mrs. Lausch



**HAPPY  
SUMMER**

### Important Dates to Remember:

**July and August** — The Apple Giving Tree will be in all three parishes over this two month period. Thank you to everyone who provides much-needed school supplies, snacks, and recess toys for our children!

**Monday, August 29, 2022** — First day of school

# HARRISBURG CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY NEWS

## Fifth Grade Participates in Mars Stem Lab with NASA



For several months, the fifth graders participated in a STEM lab with NASA. NASA is working very hard to discover ways to grow plants in space and especially now on Mars, as they hope to send humans to Mars in the next several years. Food is essential for human survival and with limited resources on Mars, NASA is studying ways we can grow food fast with limited water, sources of fertilizer and will grow within a chamber that produces light. With this experiment, our class had to write a proposal to NASA using the scientific method, which included our hypothesis and research about growing plants using fertilizer. This lab lasted eight weeks, that included planting, observation, measurement, and harvesting our radishes. In this lab, we participated in two different trials. The first trial lasted four weeks, which consisted of growing radishes with limited fertilizer. They grew in a chamber that consisted of a different color spectrum of light, in Mars-like soil. In the first trial, there was limited growth in our radishes. In the second part of our experiment, we decided as

a class on what kind of fertilizer would benefit the growth of our radishes. In the second trial that lasted another four weeks, we decided to use leaves, corn starch and the use of old vegetation, which was our old radishes that we grew in the first experiment. In the second trial our radishes grew faster and taller within the four weeks that were given; unfortunately, there was not much growth in the soil of our radishes. Unfortunately, we discovered that our plants did not grow fast enough within the four weeks that we were allotted. In the end, we discussed the different factors on why this happened and came up with ideas on how we could possibly change the experiment if we were to do this project again. We are very grateful for the opportunity for our class to participate in this special lab with NASA.

— Miss Wrightstone



## What's Happening in Seventh Grade

The end of the school year is just around the corner and seventh graders are anxious to be the leaders of our school. In Science they have studied all things weather and are currently exploring genetics and Punnett Squares. They will be completing a Heredity pet project where they create a pet with particular traits. In Language Arts, they are continuing their study of the use of roots in their vocabulary words and in religion, finishing up their study of the Life of Jesus. As they anticipate the end of seventh grade, they are looking forward to Run for Fun and summer vacation. It has been an adventure and it won't be over until June of 2023.

— Mrs. Vogt

Watch your email and the parish bulletins for information on our next Farm Show Milkshake fundraiser, as well as our first R&K Sub and Pretzel Sandwich Sale coming this fall!



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## Pre-K Celebrates Reading Day

The Pre-K class recently accomplished the goal of reading 100 total books during the months of March and April. The challenge began on Read Across America day in March. On March 2 we celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday and spent lots of time laughing and rhyming as we listened to a selection of his stories. Each time we read a book we took turns coloring a block on our book chart. Our chart was made to look like a checkered hat. We called it the Cat in the Hat's new hat. It was a lovely design of colors when complete. Upon reaching our goal we had a morning full of special reading activities. We played rhyming bingo, sorted and ate alphabet cookies and of course read more books. We were able to earn book bucks each time we completed an activity and then bought books at the Pre-K book shop to take home. Reading is so much fun!  
— Mrs. Rushinski



## 4th Grade Has Had a Busy Year!



It is hard to believe that the end of the school year is quickly approaching. Fourth Grade has had such a GREAT year!! The students were able to sing at the Cathedral for mass. Some children learned how to be altar servers and served at our weekly mass. They played learning games to master multiplication/division and reading. Now they are looking forward to a restful summer break and new adventures in fifth grade!

— Mrs. Hartman



**Did You Know?** Of our 22 graduating 8th graders, 18 students plan to attend Bishop McDevitt High School? Of the remaining students, three plan to attend Dauphin County Technical School (DC Tech) and one will attend a charter high school. We will all of our graduates the best of luck wherever their path takes them. May God bless you always!

# HARRISBURG CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY NEWS

## Physical Fitness at HCE

It has been a wonderful 2021-22 school year in Phys Ed with our students. This spring in Phys Ed our students have done a variety of different activities that have taught various skill and health related fitness components. Students have participated in sport units such as Basketball and Volleyball. In February grades 3-8 participated in the HCE Winter Olympic Games. The games featured both sport related and fitness related games such as; Scarf Skating, Poly Dot Skiing, Basketball Biathlon, Scooter Bobsled, Luge, and Floor Hockey. Some other lessons this spring have included Easter Fitness Hunt, Jump Rope, Dance, team handball, and Frisbee. Our students have learned a lot of valuable skills such as proper technique, game strategies, game rules, team play, and sportsmanship. In addition to learning different skills and sport strategies, students have learned many different lifelong fitness and health concepts such as: heart rate, moderate to vigorous activity, cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, body composition, training principles, cool downs and injury prevention. It has been such a pleasure watching our students not only have fun but learning to be physically active and healthy young people!



— Mr. Weachter

Please continue to save Coke product caps for our school. Last year, HCE earned several hundred dollars from the codes from Coke, Sprite, Fanta and Barq's soda caps, 12 pack cardboard and 24-pack plastic wrap. HCE is still limited in our fundraisers due to COVID, but collecting

Coke caps is one fundraising project that can safely continue. Another source of fundraising that can continue is Box Tops. Although this program has changed in the last few years (no more clipping emblems from products), HCE can still earn money from the Box Tops program. Download the Box Tops app to your phone, scan your store receipts whenever you purchase an item with the new digital Box Top logo (at right). If you prefer, just save your receipts and turn them in to the school in an envelope marked "Box Tops" and receipts will be scanned for you. Please also turn in empty Little Bites pouches as the school earns points for them as well. By saving these small items, you help us earn big money for our school. In addition, registering your rewards card at **Weis** grocery stores helps our school. Please contact a school office for more information on these easy ways to help Harrisburg Catholic fundraisers! Thank you!





# HARRISBURG CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY NEWS

## *Girls on the Run*



On May 14th, The Girls on the Run team will run their 5k at HACC. This season thirteen girls from grades 3-5 have been participating in the Girls on the Run program under the direction of coaches Miss Wrightstone and Mrs. Vogt. For ten weeks, we have met twice a week after school. Girls on the Run is a physical activity-based positive youth development program that inspires girls to be joyful, healthy and confident with the integration of running. Over the course of the program the girls develop emotional, social, mental and physical development. Also, in the program the girls designed and implemented a community impact project.

The girls organized a collection drive for the Harrisburg Area Humane Society. Over the course of the program, each girl has set running goals which has helped them prepare for a 5k at the end of the season. Throughout the program the girls have been building friendships, character, confidence and confidence.

The Heart and Sole program for grades 6-8 will be held in the fall at the Cathedral Campus. Stay tuned for details!  
— Miss Wrightstone

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## **HCES Development and Advancement Update**

Dan Reisteter, Director of Development and Advancement

Thanks to the generous support of many, the 2021-22 school year annual appeal was able to raise \$13,845. We appreciate all who contributed to the appeal this year, which helps the school tremendously!

Many businesses also helped fund scholarships for our students, through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. This year for the first time, a soft roll-out of the EITC Special Purpose Entity (SPE) program was made in the fall. The Pennsylvania EITC/OSTC Special Purpose Entity (SPE) Program allows individuals with a PA state income tax liability in excess of \$3,500 to donate to Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School and receive a PA state tax credit for 90% of their donation each year. The remaining 10% of their donation is a deductible charitable contribution for federal tax purposes. These tax credit contributions will allow Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School to provide scholarships for those students and families most in need. A more comprehensive marketing campaign to promote this to potential donors will be made in the future.

HCES also held its first online silent auction in February 2022. The auction was a success and \$3,500 was raised! Many thanks to 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Sara Wrightstone for organizing the auction. Look for this to continue in the future!

HCES is pursuing various grant opportunities through PA, Dauphin County, the city of Harrisburg and private foundations and businesses in order to provide needed financial assistance for the operations of the school. We thank all those businesses that have supported the school in so many different ways! In addition, HCES offers many thanks to the support and efforts of state Senator John DiSanto (R-Dauphin, Perry)), state Representative Patty Kim (D-Dauphin, Cumberland) and Congressman Scott Perry (R-Cumberland, York)!



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## Spring News for Grade 8

This school year is flying by and do we have news for you! On Wednesday, March 30, the eighth grade class traveled to the Shrine of Padre Pio in Barto with Father Brommer, Father Phil, Mrs. Weltmer and Miss Mahnken. The day was spent in prayer and reflection as they prepared for their Confirmation. The day was an uplifting experience for all!



Sunday, April 24, the students celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation. Erica, Brianna, Joyse, Adrianette, Erick, Christian, Justin, Milagros, Jennifer and Leniah were all confirmed in the Cathedral by Bishop Gainer. It was a beautiful ceremony and on a wonderful Spring day. We rejoice as they continue their faith journey as full members of the Church.

In just a few short weeks our eighth graders will be graduating and heading off to High School. Their last day at Harrisburg Catholic Elementary is Thursday, May 26. The Graduation Ceremony will be held on Tuesday, May

31, 2022 in the Cathedral of St. Patrick at 7 PM. We look forward to celebrating all their accomplishments.

— Miss Mahnken

## 2nd Grade Takes a Second Step



Once a week, Mr. Boes, our school counselor from the CAIU, comes to Second Grade to teach Second Step. Second Step is a web based social-emotional learning curriculum. Through a variety of media, activities and interactive components the students are taught lessons about growth mindset, goal setting, emotion management, empathy, kindness and problem solving. The children love their visits from Mr. Boes. They sing, dance, play team games, model and role play all the while getting the tools that can improve their lives.



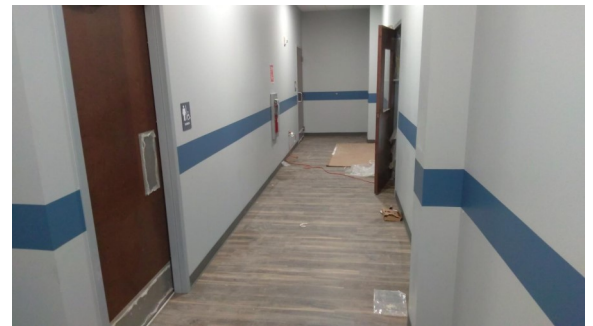
— Mrs. Kreiser



# HARRISBURG CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY NEWS

## Cathedral Education Center Construction Project Makes Great Strides

The Cathedral Education Center project is quickly changing the face of our downtown Cathedral Campus. This past school year brought many changes — and challenges — for teachers, students, and construction workers alike, but it also brought wonderful opportunities. The JEM Group, led on this project by Mark Jordan, has proven time and again how wonderful and caring they are for our children. In the fall, students had the opportunity to watch heavy equipment dig holes, cement being poured and carpenters and masons make walls and frames appear almost out of nowhere. Students had the unique opportunity to learn first hand how many of these operations work. Crews worked tirelessly during the winter and spring months to make progress and everyone had the chance to see the work-in-progress after our school-wide Mass in May. From the awe of the brand new bathrooms to the surprise over having an elevator in the school, students were excited to see what was happening to the Cathedral Education Center. The completion of Phase I (the new middle section) is expected any day, and Phase II (the North/Shanahan Building) is progressing quickly. EVERYONE is thrilled to see the progress. If you would like to see photos of the building project, check out our school's website, [www.hbgcathelem.org](http://www.hbgcathelem.org) and click on Construction Photos at the top or go to our Facebook page. You don't want to miss any photos — join us in our excitement of this wonderful project. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Cathedral Education Center Project. We are so grateful for your contributions and support. *Good things are happening here!*



### Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School

Reverend Joshua Brommer, Executive Pastor

Reverend Orlando Reyes, Pastor

[www.hbgcathelem.org](http://www.hbgcathelem.org)

This newsletter is provided by the Community Outreach, Marketing and Fundraising Committee.

*If you would like information on how to participate in this committee's activities, please contact a school office.*