

Dear West Catholic Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year. It is always exciting to begin a new year because of the opportunities to meet new students and families, try new strategies, or implement changes brought about by suggestion, reflection, or even a pandemic. This year promises to be another great adventure as we work on many things while doing our very best to form disciples of Christ through a dynamic, excellence-driven Catholic education.

### **In The Classroom**

Next week staff will report for in-service work and professional development. We are continuing to learn active and engaging strategies that create student centered classrooms. Instruction in academics continues to be excellent, evidenced by students' high standardized test and AP scores. We are adding more support for staff and students by hiring a co-teacher into the academic support department, Mrs. Molly Bergman, who will be seen in and out of several classrooms this year.

The daily schedule will remain a hybrid schedule, but a few adjustments were made in order to allow us to be more supportive of students and their needs. These updates include:

- Office hours have been replaced with an end of day session called Pomodoro. Pomodoro is a strategy that provides a short period of time focused on the completion of one or more tasks. Pomodoro will be assigned to students that have work to complete or need some additional support for academics. It will be treated just like a class, and students that skip any sessions they are assigned will receive two hours of detention which is the same as the discipline for skipping a class period. Students that do not get assigned have the option to sign up for a Pomodoro session or they can be dismissed for the day.
- The school day continues to begin at 8am, but there are different dismissal times each day depending on which schedule is being utilized. The different schedules are on the student iPad home screen and can be found on the school website .
- Focus periods will take place on Thursdays & Fridays and Households will meet on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

We are excited about our new teachers and some changes for familiar faces as well. In addition to Mrs. Bergman, we welcome Mr. Robert Fix to the English department, Ms. Lauren Smith to the Foreign Language department, and Ms. Rebekah Smith to the Social Studies department. Mr. Schaub has transitioned over to the Science department. Students should also know that there were several classroom changes so pay attention to the room assignments on their schedule.

The Household system continues to develop under great leadership. Through a volunteer and interview process, each house determined a Peer Advocate to work with the mentor to lead the household. The house system will also be the guide for student leadership moving forward. Student government will be made up of representatives from each house and community.

Finally, don't forget to look for ways to see what is going on or to be included in some of the fun by downloading the Superfan app for WC on your phone or table.

With the news about required isolations and quarantines from the Kent County Health Department, we have added some sessions to our staff in-service at the start of the year for staff to be able to prepare and plan for supporting students who are required to stay home from school for an extended period of time.

## **Outside the classroom**

We are welcoming a new face to the school counseling department. Mrs. Leah Ebbert is joining Mrs. Ysasi and Mrs. Ford this year in supporting students. Don't forget to speak with a counselor now through the first week of school for schedule changes. Changes will not be made after the deadline.

Mr. Kutzli and Mr. Bailey are back in the technology department. If you have any questions about devices or the softwares West Catholic uses, please contact us. Please also go to the parent page on the West Catholic website, <https://www.grwestcatholic.org/parents>, to find information about and tutorials on all the great products used to help us partner with families for each student's education.

Mrs. Jones and her incredible staff in the food service department are excited to provide a great menu this year, including bringing back the salad bar and taco bar. Please see her letter in the back to school packet for more information regarding lunchroom services.

Students and visitors will notice there have been several monitors put up in the halls and in the cafeteria that can be referred to for lots of information.

This year marks the final year of our strategic plan. Because we are in our final year, we will be working on developing a new plan to guide us beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. The community will be asked to join in the development of this plan. If you are interested in being a part of the process, please reach out to myself or Mrs. Kneibel, President/CEO.

Thank you again for being a part of the West Catholic community and entrusting us with sharing in the responsibility to educate your students. It is truly a joy each and every year to look forward to what will come from a new school year. If you have any questions or would like to inquire about opportunities to support the students, please call or email me.

God Bless & Go Falcons!

**Tony Fischer | Principal**

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**Our Mission: *To form Disciples of Christ through a dynamic, excellence-driven Catholic education***