

# PARENT GUIDE

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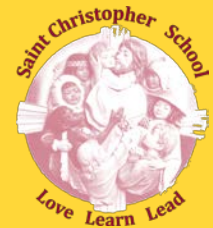


## A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

- **After School Program ASP** [Daily 2:00-5:30 PM]
  - Saint Christopher School offers after care for our families. We provide a safe, wholesome, convenient and affordable environment for your children. The program runs from dismissal to 5:30p.m.
  - On a half day, you must provide a lunch for your child.
  - In the event of an early closing due to inclement weather or other emergency, the program will close at 3:00 p.m.
  - Children should bring a change of clothes. Sneakers must be worn during the after school program to participate in all activities. The types of activities offered include: arts and crafts, organized games, free play.
- **Auction-** [Spring]
  - This is the school's largest fundraiser of the year. It usually occurs in the spring. It is a great adult only night filled with good food, adult beverages and some wonderful items to bid on in both the silent and live auctions. It is also a significant team effort where parents can earn CO-OP hours.
- **Background Check**
  - This is a mandatory requirement for any parent or family member that has any supervisory contact with the students. This only needs to be done once and when the office and OCS has it on file that person is qualified for the remainder of their Catholic School participation.
- **Back to School Bagel Bash** [1<sup>st</sup> Day of School]
  - Sponsored by the Home School Association (HSA), this parent activity is held on the first day of school at drop off time to welcome both new and existing parents to the new school year. It is an informal meet & greet complete with bagels, coffee and juice.
- **Bake Sale** [Monthly Early Dismissal Days, Wednesdays]
  - These occur on the Early Dismissal days, typically the second Wednesday of the month. This is a fundraiser for HSA and a day that students look forward to each month. Two families from each grade are requested to provide an item for the bake sale each month, so responsibilities rotate across families. Most items are between \$.25 and \$.50.
- **Band** [Weekly]
  - Instrument lessons start with Cadet Band in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. There is also the Advanced Band for 2<sup>nd</sup> year to 5<sup>th</sup> year students. These students meet weekly on Fridays for lessons and practice.
  - These students starting in 5<sup>th</sup> grade have the opportunity to be invited into the Regional and All State Band of CT Future Musicians
- **Book Buddy**
  - The 4<sup>th</sup> Graders pair up with Kindergarten to help with reading and make friends outside their grade.
- **Book Fairs** [Held three times a year for an entire week]
  - The Three Scholastic Book Fairs are weeklong events that occur at the beginning of the school year, during Catholic Schools Month and at the end of the year (end-of-year is a BOGO event). This event is open to all grades, including PreK3 and PreK4. Teachers will coordinate with the students regarding what days they will be shopping. Normally, students also get a "preview shopping day." Preschool teachers will also send home a "wish list" of books that your child was interested in purchasing.
- **Book Fee** [Due on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>]

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- \$50 per student K-8 due by September 1<sup>st</sup>. This is for the text books and workbooks needed throughout the year.
- **Box Tops** [Year-long]
  - The collection of these Box Tops is a small fundraiser which brings cash back to the school. Ask your friends and family to collect them, too!
- **Campbell's** [Year-long]
  - Collection of labels provides the school with points to be used towards supplies from the Campbell's company
- **Can Drive** [twice a year on a Weekend]
  - This is to help the community with donations of cans to be redeemed.
- **Catholic Schools Month** [January]
  - Most Catholic schools in the United States celebrate Catholic Schools Week during the last week in January. The Archdiocese of Hartford, however, designates the month of January as Catholic Schools Month. It is a time to celebrate all that is good about Catholic Schools. Many events are held during this month, including a book fair and a Grinder Supper (see below).
- **Cheerleading** [Basketball Season]
  - The Cheerleading team help cheer on the Varsity and Junior Varsity Girls and Boys Basketball teams. They also are part of the Pep Rally
- **Children's Liturgy** [Monthly]
  - Students in specific grades from the school and religious education program participate in one mass per month. All are encouraged to attend. The schedule is posted on the school calendar online.
- **Christmas Express** [week long- last week of November or 1<sup>st</sup> week of December]
  - This is available for whole week and during Breakfast with Santa in Late November or start of December.
  - This is a way for the kids to get small gifts for their family and friends. Items range from \$.025 to \$2.00 or so. They have multiple opportunities during the week, usually 1 to plan and 1 to visit and buy.
- **Concerts** [December and May]
  - Future Musicians LLC Band Teacher holds a concert with the Music Teacher each December for Christmas and May (Spring). Together they showcase all the students' talents between singing and instruments. These concerts are mandatory for Grades PreK4 - Grade 5, as attendance counts toward their music grade.
- **Cougar co-op**
  - Each family in grades K-8 is expected to offer 10 volunteer hours to benefit school events or fundraising. This does not include PreK families.
- **Donut Day** [Monthly, 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month]
  - Students can enjoy a morning snack of a glazed donut from Dunkin' Donuts and a juice box. Donut Day is sponsored by the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class to help defray their expenses for "senior" activities. This event is open to all grades, including PreK3 and PreK4. Cost as of 2015 was \$1.00 for a juice box and \$0.50 for a donut.
- **Educonnect system**
  - This is our School's information and notification system.

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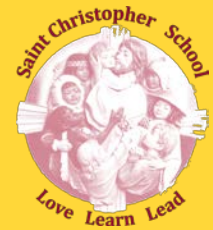
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- This system holds the student records of grades, attendance, and teacher's websites for homework and information for grades 4-8. You should be given a user name and password at the beginning of the school year.
- This is also an email notification system for keeping parents, school and HSA in communication.
- **External fundraisers** [Multiple times through the school year]
  - The external fundraisers revolve around fun events at sponsoring retail, restaurant, or entertainment outlets like Chuck E Cheese or Nomads. A portion of sales benefits Saint Christopher School. These external fundraisers do not count toward the family fundraising fee.
- **Field day** [May]
  - A fun day for students involving games and activities outside of their typical schedule of classes.
- **Fundraising Fee**
  - \$250.00 per family, PreK through grade 8. This fee is part of the budget that helps defray additional costs of the school.
- **Golf tournament** [Either Spring or Fall]
  - The Golf Tournament is another major fundraiser for the school. Parents can help in a variety of ways including sponsorships, golfing in the tournament, or volunteering either before the event or on the day of the tournament.
- **Grandparents & Special Persons' Club** [monthly]
  - The Grandparents/Special Persons Club is open to all grandparents and those individuals who play that role in the lives of Saint Christopher students. It is an informal group that meets once a month and focuses on service to the school. The club has sponsored baskets for the Annual Auction and hosted the Alumni Induction Reception and Grandparents/Special Persons Day each year.
- **Grinder Supper** [During Catholic Schools Month]
  - The Grinder Supper is one of the family events during Catholic Schools Month. For a reduced cost (capped at a family maximum), families can come out to enjoy dinner at the school and some mid-winter socialization. This event is coordinated with the winter Scholastic Book Fair fundraiser (see below) for the school, so that parents may shop together with their children.
- **Halloween Party** [October 31<sup>st</sup> -depending on school calendar]
  - This is a party day for PreK3- Grade 2 to wear costumes and parade around campus. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade joins them for the entertainment for the afternoon after snacks. In past years, the entertainment has included everything from the CT Science Center Bubble Show, to a magician, to a Traveling Petting Zoo. Parents are invited to attend and watch the parade as well as the entertainment.
- **Home & School Association - HSA**
  - Immediate members of the school families are members of the association.
  - To provide opportunities for 'fun raising' among the families, friends and parishioners
  - To promote cooperation between parents/guardians and teachers in the educational process
  - To provide a natural setting for evangelization from school to home and to community
  - To encourage a relationship with the parish. Many activities may be handled by various school committees such as Student Council or Advancement Committee or committees coordinated with parish groups.

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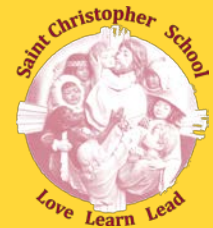
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- To strengthen the relationship between home and school with emails and newsletters and by promoting such activities as:
  - Providing frequent communication between home and school.
  - Inviting parents to visit the school when appropriate
  - Encouraging teachers to communicate frequently with parents/guardians of students
  - Creating opportunities for volunteer services as requested by the school
  - Assisting in providing the school with additional equipment and facilities not provided by the operating budget
- To work as parent ambassadors for all new families and to encourage engagement of these families into a community toward the goal of enrolling more parish children as well as children from other parishes and the community at large
- **Ice cream Social** [September]
  - This is an HSA sponsored activity that is usually the first family event of the year. Ice cream and toppings are available for a small charge and children get to have a fun time with their friends, both old and new.
- **Lunch and milk - How does my child purchase?**
  - Milk is available daily for \$.50
  - Lunch can be purchased through the office for \$2.60; Weekly lunch cards =\$13 and monthly =\$52.
  - Menu of choices can be found on the school website
- **Men's Club**
  - This is a group of likeminded parents that support and help supplement the sports activities such as equipment, umpires, uniforms. They also help for other items needed by the students such as recess items (balls and such). They are a booster club, who will also hold special fundraisers for the extra-curricular activities. Hours spent working with the Men's Club normally count toward your family's co-op hour obligation.
- **National Junior Honor Society - NJHS**
  - The National Honor Society is a well-known organization that recognizes high school students for their outstanding scholarship, service, character, citizenship and leadership. The corresponding organization for students in middle school is known as the National Junior Honor Society. This organization recognizes the same qualities as the National Honor Society. Chapters of the National Junior Honor Society, commonly abbreviated as NJHS, exist all over the country.
  - The Saint Christopher Chapter is *Pacem in Terris* which means Peace on Earth.
- **No Uniform Days** [Monthly]
  - Each month the school holds a No Uniform Day. Students pay \$3-5 for the privilege of not wearing a uniform that day. The donations go to a specific charity. Saint Christopher School works to instill in its students the importance of service to others. One No Uniform Day benefits the school's Annual Auction. This event does not apply to PreK3 or PreK4, although at times, the preschool will sponsor a corresponding Pajama Day with a small donation.

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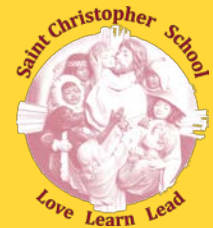
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- Red White and Blue day- This is one of the monthly No Uniform event days. The benefiting charity is always related in some way to the armed services. Children are asked to wear red, white and blue to honor those who have served our country.
- **Pep Rally** [November]
  - Annual family event to encourage support for the school sports teams.
- **Picture Day** [Fall and Spring][DV1]
  - We have 2 picture days, one in the Fall with uniform and a second in the Spring. For fall pictures, students wear their uniforms. For spring pictures, students wear an outfit of their choice. Also in the spring, there is a sibling picture option. Siblings in the school may have their picture taken together, and younger siblings not yet school age are welcome to be a part of the picture as well.
- **Product Fundraisers** [Multiple times through the school year]
  - The product fundraisers are a great opportunity for families to help earn credit toward their fundraising fee. The products are geared to what most families might be able to sell to family, friends, and co-workers, such as Yankee Candles and Lyman Pies. The profit raised by each family is applied to the family fundraising fee.
- **Room Parents**
  - Each grade has a Room Parent that helps the Teacher and HSA with communications and coordination of multiple things throughout the year. This person would have 10 volunteer hours by making the commitment for the school year.
  - They would coordinate the Teacher Appreciation Day for their grade's month.
  - Halloween Party for snacks and volunteers (Virtus & Background Check completed) for applicable grades for costume changes.
  - Monthly bake sale donations – we ask for 2 per family to be sent in the day of the sale.
  - Grade Contact Listing – this listing is used by Room Parent and HSA for communication purposes only.
- **Saint Christopher Sports** [through the sports seasons]
  - Track, Soccer, Basketball, Karate, cheerleading, cross country
- **School and Parish Picnic** [annual]
  - The Parish and School Picnic is an annual event to bring both the parish and school together to celebrate community
- **School Board**
  - A group of dedicated people charged with implementing the school's mission and vision guided by a strategic plan that have pledged to work hard to improve the school and to help the Parish and School succeed in any of its endeavors.
- **SchoolReach**
  - This is the emergency notification system that is used to notify the school community-families and teachers- about urgent issues of school closings, snow days and other potential urgent announcements.
  - These emergency messages are sent to the phone numbers and/or email addresses that the school has on file.
  - Please keep contact information current at all times during the school year so that you can be reached during a potential emergency.
- **Science Fair and International Night** [January-March]
  - These 2 events might both be celebrated this year.

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- These are held at night around 6:30 pm
- These events involve long-term projects for the students depending on their grade level
- **Service Hours**
  - A requirement for Middle School students to perform 10 hours of service each year to help others and school. Details are provided throughout the year by the teachers.
- **ShopRite** [Sept-March]
  - Register your shopper's card online and all purchases count towards points for the school to use to buy supplies from their catalog.
- **Soup and Stations** [Wednesday evenings during Lent]
  - When the Saint Christopher Community joins together to enjoy a dinner of soup and then proceeds to the church for the Stations of the Cross
- **Spell-a-thon** [January]
  - Fundraiser involving the students getting sponsors for a spelling contest
- **State of the School Report** [late November-early December]
  - This is a meeting for parents to come and find out about the state of the school from the Principal and the School Board. Financial status is discussed, and it provides an excellent opportunity to ask questions of the Board and Administration.
- **Teacher Appreciation Day** [Monthly]
  - Each month on a selected day, a specific grade provides the faculty with treats in the Teacher's Room as a Thank You for all they do.
- **Tuition Credit Program (TCP)** [All Year Long][DV2]
  - The Tuition Credit Program is the one fundraising program geared to Tuition Assistance (50% of designated percentage goes to the school and 50% goes to the family tuition account for the following year). People can simply purchase gift cards for stores that you use every day and a portion of those sales, depending on the store, comes back to you in the form of a tuition credit. The reason for the effectiveness of TCP program is simple: families generate revenue through purchases they would make anyway. Groceries, clothing, toys, gifts, even gasoline can be purchased with TCP. Gift cards must be purchased using either the TCP form that is available in the school office and on the school website or the program website ([www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com)) designating Saint Christopher School as the beneficiary. Instant e-gift-cards are available via the website.
- **Uniforms**
  - Regular Uniforms can be purchased through Blake Uniforms. This company comes in at least twice a year to help with sizing and purchasing new uniforms that your student has outgrown, and you may also purchase from them online. If your outgrown uniforms are still in good condition, please consider donating them to the school for the used uniform closet for those that have the need.
  - Gym uniforms – can be purchases at any time directly with the office. The gym uniform order form is located on the school website under the Admissions Menu
- **Used Uniform Closet** [available all year long]
  - On the right-hand stage wing is a small area where we store gently used uniforms for the next generation needing some help with uniform supplies. There is no charge to take clothing from the used uniform closet, although donations are gratefully accepted. Donations may be may to the school office.
  - The used uniform closet is available year-round; who knows when the next growth spurt will hit?

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- If your child has outgrown their uniforms and they are still serviceable, please consider donating them to the used uniform closet to help another family.
- **Vendor Fair [Fall][DV3]**
  - Held in advance of the holidays normally in mid-November, this is a one-stop-shopping event at Saint Christopher School where popular brands offer their products for purchase. Vendors will be onsite at the gym. Past vendors have included Pampered Chef and Thirty-One gifts. Individual crafters also attend.
- **Virtus Training**
  - This is a mandatory requirement for any parent or family member that has any supervisory contact with the students. This only needs to be done once and when the office and OCS has it on file that person is qualified for the remainder of their Catholic School participation.
- **Yearbook Club**
  - This club helps plan and take the pictures used in the annual school yearbook. They meet regularly to plan the yearbook.