



CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

School Newsletter

Newsletter
August 2008

From the Principal's Desk:

Dear Parents,

I hope that this back to school newsletter finds you enjoying your summer and serves as a reminder that the 2008-2009 school year is right around the corner. I would like to extend a warm welcome to those of you who are new to the Catholic Central High School community and a "welcome back" to those returning.

First Class Facilities

The summer has been a busy and exciting time for the Catholic Central staff and students. This summer a variety of sports camps were hosted at the new CAT Fieldhouse and many current and future Cougars were able to take advantage of this beautiful new facility. We are also in the process of seeking permission from the Grand Rapids Township Planning Commission to enhance the outdoor facilities at the CAT including a proposed new stadium that would host a variety of athletic competitions, including Football, Soccer, and Lacrosse. We will keep you informed of any new developments.

Downtown, **the Cathedral Square Project** continues to progress and the offices of the Diocese of Grand Rapids including the Catholic Secondary Schools office are now in full operation in the new building on the corner of Division and Wealthy. The parking ramp is completed and will continue to be shared by the diocese and Catholic Central. Catholic Central students will be given parking instructions at Orientation Day. Along with the progress of the new facilities are some major enhancements of the surrounding roads and drop off/ pickup areas on our campus. Goodrich Avenue is currently closed and under construction and will be reopened near the beginning of the school year and a new bus pick up/ drop off area has been constructed behind the gym off of LaGrave Ave. As the project continues it will be very important that students and visitors stay clear of construction zones and pay careful attention to communications regarding these areas. Soon we will communicate to you and your students some changes in the student drop off and pickup procedures.

Catholic Central Welcomes New Staff

In addition to the physical changes at the school there have been some staff changes as well. What I have been most impressed with in the group of "new hires" is their obvious passion for teaching in a *Catholic School*. A teaching candidate's commitment to helping students grow in their faith is a significant part of our hiring process.

The blend of youth, experience and dedication to Catholic education bring us an exceptional group of educators to continue the tradition of excellence at Catholic Central.

Todd Kolster joins the CC administrative staff as our new Athletic Director. Todd will oversee all operations related to athletics and work with Tim Rogers on supervision and scheduling of the CAT Facilities. Todd leaves an impressive career as an assistant football coach at Grand Valley State University where he was instrumental in their winning of four NCAA Division II National Championships. Todd has earned his Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from GVSU as well as BA Degrees from Hope College in Kinesiology, Physical Education, and Communications. In addition to GVSU Todd has also worked in the athletic departments at Hope College and East Grand Rapids High School.

Important Phone Numbers

Main Office:	233-5899
Attendance:	233-5812
Guidance Office:	233-5810
Athletic Office:	233-5898
Business Office:	233-5976



Steve Passinault, **Principal**

Tom Maj, **Assistant Principal**

Heidi Clark-Smitley, **Director of Guidance**

Todd Kolster, **Athletic Director**

Kathryn Walsh, **Campus Minister**

Mary Ottenwess, **Technology Director**

From the Principal ~ cont.

Mary Ottenwess has been hired as Catholic Central's new Technology Director. Mary will lead CC in all areas of technology with an emphasis on teacher training and the development of both short and long term technology plans. Mary has her Masters Degree in Educational Technology from Grand Valley State University as well as a BS Degree in Biology from Calvin College. Mary was the Technology Director at Kellogsville Public Schools and most recently worked as a Computer Support Specialist in the Grand Rapids Christian Schools. Mary resides in Rockford and is a member of Our Lady of Consolation Parish.

Sarah Hipp has been hired in the main office to replace Lisa Doyle as the attendance secretary and assistant main office secretary. Lisa Doyle replaces Tricia Rikans (who moved to Florida) as the main office head secretary. Sarah is a 1988 Catholic Central graduate and has an Associates Degree in liberal arts from Grand Rapids Community College. Sarah has ten years of experience (1994-2004) as a high school secretary at West Catholic and is a member of St. Anthony's Parish.

Enrollment

We have currently registered 174 freshman students for the 2008-2009 school year. This class, that will continue to grow, along with some new international and transfer students enrolling in the upper grades has our enrollment total at 786. We continue to take phone calls inquiring about enrolling students at Catholic Central and by the start of the school year hope to be near our enrollment total from last year. We thank you for your confidence and support in making a Christ-centered education for your children a priority.

In closing, I would remind all families new to Catholic Central High School of the importance of being at the *New Student Orientation* on August 21st. A detailed schedule is included in this newsletter. For all returning families I look forward to seeing you at the Open House on September 10th if not sooner.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer!

Yours in Christ,

Steve Passinault

From the Assistant Principal

Dear Parents,

Welcome to those attending Catholic Central High School for the first time and to those returning. I'm looking forward to the start of the new school year and the excitement that comes with the students, new staff, and programs. Little has changed in our policies and procedures.

Campus safety: Catholic Central's emergency response practices continue to be under review to ensure that staff and students are safe and that these practices are up to date. Furthermore, our procedures are coordinated with local police and fire protection.

Catholic Central High School provides a learning environment that may be subject to major disruptions as a result of occurrences beyond the control of the school. All members of our school community have and will have opportunities throughout the school year to respond to these events through a series of drills mandated by the State. **All schools are required to hold two critical incident drills, in addition to their fire and tornado drills.**

The goal of emergency management exercises is to test and enhance the overall capability of our school community, based on plans, policies, and procedures. Preparation and practice of those responsibilities for response and recovery from emergencies or disasters will enhance the ability to protect lives, property, and the environment. Exercises identify areas that are proficient and those that need improvement. Schools that develop and maintain viable exercise programs will be better prepared for actual events.

Assistant Principal ~ cont.

Catholic Central's policy and procedures manual is designed to provide employees with an understanding of their role before, during, and after emergencies. It is designed to focus on the safety of staff, students, and visitors and the protection of property during emergencies.

There are several practices I would ask of parents:

- when visiting school, please check in at the Main Office.
- discuss emergency procedures and the schools guest policy with your children.
- do not send deliveries to school (lunches, flowers, balloons, etc.)
- cell phones can now pose a threat and are to be kept off during school hours, preferably left in the car.
- please notify school by 10 a.m. if your child is absent.

Cell phones: Catholic Central shares your belief that cell phones can and do serve as a means of staying in touch with your children, that they provide a level of security, and are helpful in an emergency. However, over the past two years they have become increasingly disruptive during the school day---students "texting" each other, incoming calls (many of these from parents), and students calling each other. Our current policy is to allow students to have them but the phones are to be turned off. If confiscated, a detention will be issued and the phone returned to the Parent only. If you need to get in touch with your son or daughter please call the main office.

Due to their disruptive nature, the potential threats they pose, and the potential for academic dishonesty, **this policy is under review**. Again, I would ask for everyone's cooperation in guaranteeing that if a student carries a phone that it be turned off during the day.

Uniforms: All students are to be in uniform attire, purchased from Sunshine, on the first day of school and throughout the school year. Sunshine Uniform shorts may be worn during the months of August, September, May and June . A **traditional black or brown belt** must be worn with pants and shorts. Just a reminder, socks or nylons are to be worn at all times and be of a solid navy, black, grey, or white color.

Looking forward to seeing everyone soon,

Tom Maj,

New Student/Parent Orientation ~ August 21, 2008

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| 1:30—3:00 p.m. | Session for <u>students new to Catholic Schools (only)</u> |
| 3:00—3:15 p.m. | Check-in for <u>all</u> new students (<i>students only</i>) |
| 3:15—5:00 p.m. | Students walk-through a short version of their daily schedule (<i>Learn where each class is located; students meet their teachers; meet the students in each class; learn about the class</i>) |
| 5:00—5:30 p.m. | Dinner in the Cafeteria (<i>Learn the cafeteria procedures; enjoy dinner with the Peer Ministers</i>) |
| 5:15 p.m. | Parents arrive / Check-in at Gymnasium |
| 5:30 p.m. | Student join the parents in the Gymnasium |
| 5:30—6:45 p.m. | Becoming a part of the Catholic Central Family (<i>Welcome; Student Expectations; Faith Formation and Catholic Culture; Academics; Athletics; Parent Communications/Website and Infinite Campus</i>) |
| 6:45—7:45 p.m. | Students: "Getting to know your classmates" (<i>Led by Peer Ministers</i>)
Parents: "Parent Networking: Getting to know each other" (<i>Led by We Care Parent Org.</i>) |
| 8:00—9:00 p.m. | A celebration of Mass together at the Cathedral of St. Andrew |

A Message From the Guidance Office

Student schedules for returning upperclassmen will be posted to the Infinite Campus Portal by the third week of August. Individual schedules will not be mailed through the postal service unless specifically requested. **Freshmen and new student schedules** will receive a hard copy by mail prior to Orientation, the third week of August. As always, CCHS is not able to accommodate requests for schedule changes- please invite your student to email his/her counselor if a required course (such as religion, English, math, science) is missing. We thank you in advance for your cooperation during this very busy season.

Please review the school calendar for **parent programs** hosted throughout the academic year. Parent programs offer wonderful opportunities to connect with your student's guidance counselor as well as learn resources and tips for your student's academic success. As the counselors prepare the information requested by students and parents each year, a shift is being made from grade-level meetings for parents to thematic workshops which are open to parents with students in any year of high school. Parents are encouraged to attend as many workshops as convenient. These workshops will be hosted at the CC Cafeteria in the evenings throughout the first semester. Topics and guest speakers will cover college admissions, academic strategies, PrepHQ introduction, career exploration, and last but not least, financial aid for higher education. As a quick reminder, all parent workshops will be advertised in the **school announcements** at www.grcatholiccentral.com in advance to the date.

Questions? Please call Mrs. Ford, Guidance secretary at 233-5810 OR email your student's counselor:

Tom Shangraw (A-G) tomshangraw@grcss.org

Joel Passinault (H-O) joelpassinault@grcss.org

Heidi Clark-Smitley (P-Z) heidismitley@grcss.org

PSAT Preparation - August 18

For students who are interested in preparing for the PSAT, which juniors and qualified sophomores take in October, Academic Coach Wendy Marty will hold a series of 2 3-hour sessions, starting August 18 and ending before the first day of school. Every effort will be made to work around sports schedules, based on the students who sign up. Wendy has been helping students prepare for the ACT and PSAT for 30 years. Cost of the program is \$75, plus \$17 for the Barron's PSAT prep book. If interested, please call Nancy Kennedy at 581-5348 by August 12.

Orientation Day ~ Tuesday, August 26, 2008

ALL GRADES: 8:00—11:30 A.M.

The senior, junior, sophomore and freshman meetings will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the students homeroom. The homeroom number is indicated on the students schedule and is the same as their 5th hour class.

At 10:00, all students will be together in the Cathedral for the Opening School Mass.

All students are to be in compliance with the school uniform code, including haircuts and shaves, for these meetings. Students will receive their final class schedule and their locker assignment. Meeting will conclude around 11:30 a.m. Parents should arrange to pick up their son/daughter at that time.

School pictures will be taken on Wednesday, August 27th. Picture envelopes will be distributed on Orientation Day and should be brought back to school on Wednesday, August 27th.

Athletics

What a great day to be a COUGAR! The athletic program plays a critical role in the educational process at Catholic Central. The impact of school sports on our community is significant to a very large percentage of our families. As we improve our facilities and expand our sports programs we need parental help to coordinate the multitude of required tasks associated with each sport. We're looking for an **adult for each team** (Varsity, JV, Freshmen) who can help the coach and the Athletic Director establish a system of team volunteers (students and adults) to make each team a positive addition to our community. This team rep will meet with the coach and AD to establish community service efforts directed at the sport facility and local community needs. They will help establish budget requests for the team, and, in general, be a conduit for good communication. They will not be a coach. **Is this something you can do?** Please contact the coach of your team if you are interested.

It is our collective responsibility to be good stewards of the facilities we enjoy.

Our **Academic eligibility criteria** for sports participation is 2.0 Grade Point Average (gpa) for Grade 10-12, and 1.5 gpa for Grade 9. This must be accomplished each nine-week grading period. Based on 4th quarter and 2nd Semester grades, is your child academically eligible? Discuss your specific requirements with your student regarding time management for church, family obligations, homework, and team requirements. *They can do it all, it just requires communication and focus.*

Your students will be issued the **2008-2009 Handbook** when school starts. Please review the Athletic Code and the "Policy on Student Dignity". The choices your student makes must reflect the spirit and intent of these policies. A behavior of *absolute respect for each other* will serve them well regardless of what they see on TV or video games. Hazing, or the appearance of hazing will not be tolerated. Performance enhancing substances, such as steroids, are absolutely inappropriate and a violation of the athletic code.

The **Cougar Golf Open**, our Booster Club fundraiser, is Monday, September 8 at The Mines and The Elks golf courses, with a steak dinner included. The steak dinner will take place immediately following the outing (around 5:30pm) at the CAT. Call Jerry Rohen at 245-8262 if you would like to participate in any way at this annual Cougar day of fun. This dedicated group makes many of our extra-curricular school programs possible.

Fall Sports Tickets:

Due to the entrance into the OK Conference, we are enduring several changes. First, the OK Conference mandates the prices of all ticket sales for all sports and all levels. The cost for **All** home/away contests and **All** ages will be **\$5**. Secondly, the scheduling combinations each week are different than the past, so please Do Not assume any days, times or locations based on prior years.

Pre-Sale Varsity Football Single Game Tickets for the four home Varsity Football games (Sept. 19th vs. South Christian @ FHE, Sept. 26th vs. Ottawa Hills @ GR. Christian, Oct. 10th vs. Hastings @ FHC and Oct. 17 vs. Wayland @ FHN) will be available at school on Thursday and Friday prior to the Varsity game (9am-3pm-Main Office) for \$4. All tickets bought at the gates will be \$5 (as set by the OK Conference).

For all other ticket prices please check our website at grcatholiccentral.com. If there are any further questions please contact the Athletic Office at 233-5898.

Catholic Central Fall Play—M*A*S*H*

This is the year that the Catholic Central Fall play comes first in the cycle at the PAC at Aquinas College. We open October 16 with the stage version of M*A*S*H*. The early performance date means that auditions must start Thursday, August 28 and will continue Monday, September 2. Sign-up sheets will be posted on the Music Room Door on August 25. The multi-ethnic cast has thirty speaking parts, fifteen for women and fifteen for men so plenty of opportunities are available for those who are interested. Auditions are broken into forty-five minute blocks, and you only need attend one block. The location of auditions will be posted on the sign-up sheet. This is your chance to be a star! Come join us in the fun. See you at auditions!

First Practice For Fall 2008 Sports

Physical Exam Form must be on file in the Athletic Office to begin practice for all teams, including Club sports.

Please call the coach if you have a particular question regarding that sport..

Boys Cross-Country: August 11, Monday, 9am, at The CAT, 2770 Knapp NE, wear running gear. Coach Jackson Fox, 774-4713.

Girls Cross-Country: August 11, Monday, 9am, at the CAT, 2770 Knapp NE, wear running gear. Coach Kelly Schipper, 890-9401.

Football: August 11, Monday, 1st session, Grade 9-12. 8:00am - 1:00pm. 2nd session, Varsity only. 6:30-8:30pm. The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring combination lock, T-shirt, shorts, cleats. Coach Tim Rogers, 233-5891. Pre-season conditioning will be prior to Aug. 11. Check with coach if you do not have details.

Girls Golf: JV & Varsity--August 7, Thurs., Centennial Country Club, time 8:00 a.m., Coach: Mike Ketelaar, 813-4765.

Boys Soccer: First tryout--August 11, Monday, 6:00-8:30pm, The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring own ball, shin guards, water, shoes. Coach John Matlak, 364-1128.

Girls Swimming: August 11, Monday, 3:15-5:30pm, Hunting YMCA Swimming Pool, 475 Lake Michigan Dr. NW, Coach John Hams, 204-5075.

Boys Tennis: August 11, Monday, 8am-1:00pm, The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring own racquet, jump rope, water bottle, and a light snack. Wear appropriate tennis clothing, including pockets. Coach Pat Williams, 456-9059. Inclement weather - report to Fieldhouse lobby at 8:00.

Volleyball: All Tryouts at The Cat, 2770 Knapp St. First Tryout—Freshmen August 11, Monday, 5:00pm, JV/Varsity August 12, Tuesday, 7:00pm, Coach Heather Abram, 453-2129.

Attention Senior Parents of the Class of 2009

All-Night Party News

The calendar still says summer, but the 2009 Senior All-Night Party Committee has swung into gear! Under the leadership of Co-Chairs Amy and Bill DeWitt, we're busy identifying locations and activities to ensure a memorable conclusion to our sons' and daughters' years at CC. To keep the event affordable for all, we're planning some exciting fundraisers – we'll be publicizing these in future issues of this newsletter. For more info on fundraising or to volunteer, contact Mary Beth Underhill at underhill5726@sbcglobal.net. For more info on the party itself, please contact Co-Chairs Amy and Bill DeWitt at bakldewitt@hotmail.com.

Academic Boosters

Academic Boosters meet monthly with Principal Steve Passinault and Counselor Heidi Clark-Smitley to support the academic environment for ALL Catholic Central students. As your schedule allows, please feel free to attend meetings, which begin at 7:45 am in the conference room outside the main office. Dates for the 2008/2009 school year are: August 19, September 17, October 22, December 3, January 21, February 18, March 18, April 22 and May 27. For more information, contact Steve, Heidi or Nancy Kennedy.

We Care News

It's not always easy to be a parent of a teenager. All of the sudden they have cars and friends that live across town and a lot more freedom. How do we keep them safe? WE CARE (**With Education Chemical Abuse Really Ends**) is here to help.

WE CARE is an organization that every parent at Catholic Central is an automatic member of. Our goal is to provide safe experiences for the students of CC and to encourage networking between parents. Experience has taught us that when parents know each other, our kids are safer. Plus, the parents have fun, too.

WE CARE, with the dedicated parents of the football team, host the after game junior/senior events at the CAT. There will also be some events for freshman/sophomore in the CC cafeteria. Additional student socials will be scheduled throughout the year.

WE CARE is hosting parties for the parents of each grade level. We encourage all parents to attend. It is so nice to be able to put names and faces together so that when your child says he is going to someone's house, you can make a connection to that family. Many times parents of seniors have lamented that they didn't get to know each other sooner. These parties are the perfect remedy. It is a nice adult evening. Our kids bring us together, they are not the focus of our evening. The additional bonus is that, although they are not fund-raisers, any money raised is saved for that class's Senior All-Night Party. (Watch for "save the dates", or contact We Care if you would like to help).

Educational speakers are another outreach that is offered to parents throughout the year. We have surveyed to choose topics that you want information on and in a forum that you would enjoy. Please make it a priority to attend. We are especially reaching out to more experienced parents. Your attendance at these meeting offers a wealth of first-hand knowledge and support to newer parents at Catholic. It is one more way to make high school a positive experience for both you and your child, (See below for information on our first speaker).

Please return the volunteer form you received with this newsletter. If you would like to be involved with the social events, or WE CARE please let me know.

Betsy Pangle
Social Chair
betsypangle@yahoo.com

WE CARE Calendar

August 28	9 – 11pm	Jr/Sr @ the CAT
September 12	9pm	Parent Speaker Series @ CAT
	9 – 11pm	Peer Ministry Dance @ CAT
September 18	Ministry Fair	
September 19	9 – 11pm	Jr/Sr @ the CAT
September 26	9 – 11pm	Jr/Sr @ the CAT
September 27	Homecoming Dance	
October 10	9 – 11pm	Jr/Sr @ the CAT
October 17	9 – 11pm	Jr/Sr @ the CAT

Library Media Center

If you enjoy books and libraries, please consider volunteering in the Catholic Central Library Media Center. Any amount of time you can give is welcome and hours are always flexible. Please contact Ann Wheeler, Library Media Specialist, at 616-233-5859 or annwheeler@grcss.org.

We Care News ~ cont.

ATTENTION JUNIOR & SENIOR PARENTS

Father Jim Kowalski's favorites included Catholic Students, fellowship, and food. In honor of his memory a generous donor has begun the Father Jim Kowalski's Fund. In beginning this fund it was noted that, "Father Jim supported the mission of WE CARE to provide safe social environments, knowing that a bit of nourishment for the body fosters a loving, caring community." The fund will be used to continue and expand the CAT parties and other opportunities for social fellowship after sporting events throughout the year.

We will be hosting post-football game parties at the CAT again this fall for all Juniors and Seniors. These parties serve to build school spirit, promote camaraderie, and give the students a safe place to gather in large numbers.

There will be staff present and the parties will end at 11pm. Food and drinks will be provided. These functions, funded exclusively through parent support, have been very successful over the past years. Please consider making a donation of \$20 to help cover the expenses. We also ask you to use the Volunteer Opportunity Form enclosed in this Newsletter to tell us how you will help. Thank you for helping to provide safe activities for all of our kids.

Great Lakes Scrip Center

Great Lakes Scrip Center offers a unique way for companies to support Catholic Central! If your company buys gift cards to use as awards, incentives or thank you's for employees or customers we'd like to introduce you to www.Rewardsandmoregiftcards.com. This website is your only source for hundreds of retail gift cards and each purchase generates a contribution for Catholic Central.

Take a look at our extensive list of participating retailers. You'll find gift cards in multiple denominations from America's most-respected retailers. They're the same gift cards you'll find in stores, but instead of time-consuming shopping trips, you can get the cards you want delivered to your door. Each gift card you buy from Rewardsandmoregiftcards.com earns a contribution for Catholic Central. You win with a large and convenient selection of cards. Your employees win with a valued recognition of their achievements. And CC wins with contributions. Check out this unique web site today!

All A's Walk

The All A's Walkathon is a fundraiser held annually to raise money for tuition assistance for all those who attend our Catholic high schools. It is a fact, that without the tuition assistance that is offered to our school families, nearly one fourth of our students would not be able to attend our Catholic high schools. With the difficult economy that we have here in Michigan, many of our own school families have been affected through downsizing and corporate pullouts. Our tuition assistance program disperses nearly one million dollars in grants and aid to help make a Catholic high education affordable to parents who desire a Catholic high school education for their children. The Walkathon is one piece of that fundraising pie.

This year the Walkathon will take place on the morning of Wednesday, October 1st. The Catholic Central students will walk to a halfway point where they are joined with the students from West Catholic and all will continue on to John Ball Park. Refreshments are served at the park, the combined bands from West Catholic and Catholic Central entertain and the students mingle. This is a half-day for all students.

The Walkathon will be "kicked off" on Friday, September 5 and our students will begin soliciting relatives, friends, business owners and neighbors for donations. All of our students are asked to participate by raising at least \$60 (more is always appreciated!) in sponsorship money. Each student will receive an ALL A's t-shirt and will be eligible for some incentive prizes. It is most important that our goal of \$60 per student is met and exceeded. Whatever money is raised over our goal minus a portion of the All A's expenses will be returned to Catholic Central for the Willy Butler fund (an emergency tuition fund available to CC families). If you can assist your son or daughter in making contacts with businesses or individuals who are capable of being All A's sponsors at the \$250, \$500 or \$2500 levels, we would greatly appreciate that. These sponsorships serve to underwrite the expenses of the t-shirts and prizes.

We encourage parents to volunteer either to walk with the students, or to distribute water along the route or to serve snacks at John Ball Park and to support all of the students in their efforts to raise \$60+. Thanks for your help. If you have any questions, please contact Jeanine Gasper 233-5824 or Arnette Kraus 233-5985.