



CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

School Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1
August 2007

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 2007-2008 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. The physical growth and change to both the downtown campus and the athletic complex at Knapp and Leffingwell (the CAT) is a positive sign of a vibrant school community. The construction of a new auxiliary gymnasium at the CAT is progressing well and will further develop the athletic facilities that are needed to operate a first class athletic program and continue to provide students with opportunities to participate in our outstanding sports programs.

Downtown, the Cathedral Square Project is in full swing. In time, it will be a wonderful addition to the Diocese of Grand Rapids and will enhance the look of the Catholic Central campus. The project includes the Grand Rapids Diocesan and Catholic Secondary School offices and a parking structure that will be shared by the diocese and Catholic Central. Along with the progress of constructing new facilities come some challenges that we will face as the building continues and school opens in a few weeks. As this unfolds it will be very important that students and visitors stay clear of construction zones and pay careful attention to directional signs in our area. We also will need to adjust our student parking as the parking structure is built. Adding congestion to an already congested area will require all drivers and pedestrians to be courteous and patient especially during the hours immediately before and after school. We will give you construction updates as they develop throughout the school year.

Another important change to our buildings downtown is that all Catholic Central school buildings will be locked while school is in session. Door hardware is being installed that will be programmed to unlock doors while students are changing classes and then lock shortly after the next class begins. Visitor access to the school buildings and gymnasium during the school day will only be granted through a "buzzer system" operated by school personnel in the main office and athletic office (for the gym). This change will enhance the safety and security of all of our staff and students.

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.

Tim Rogers has been with us since the spring and has already made a positive impact on the student athletes at Catholic Central. Tim will be teaching physical education and business and is our new varsity football coach. Tim is a veteran educator and coach who has worked primarily at the collegiate level. He has been a very successful coach and teacher at DeLaSalle Catholic High School in Chicago, Kalamazoo College, Eastern Michigan University, Cornell University and most recently DePauw University in Indiana. We are excited to have Tim join our staff.

Danielle Deng has been hired to begin our new Chinese Language program. Danielle moved to the United States from China 14 years ago. In China she taught for eight years at Central China University where she received an Excellence in Teaching Award. In Grand Rapids she has earned a Master's Degree in Education at Calvin College. She has taught Chinese at the Grand Rapids Chinese Language School and also at the Forest Hills Summer Chinese Academy. She is passionate about teaching students the Chinese language and culture.

Important Phone Numbers

Main Office: 233-5899
Attendance: 233-5801
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**
Mike Neuman, **Athletic Director**
Kathryn Walsh, **Campus Minister**
Susan Swanson, **Technology Director**

From the Principal ~ cont.

Tom Shangraw will replace Tom Passinault as our new guidance counselor. After a very successful career in banking, Tom returned to school and earned his Master's Degree in Counseling from Western Michigan University. After completing his internship at Lowell High School, Tom worked as a volunteer in the counseling offices at Forest Hills and at Catholic Central. Tom brings a wealth of professional experience to the job and is excited to return to his alma mater to counsel our students.

Tom Gallagher will be teaching all levels of Latin as well as the Honors World History classes. Tom comes highly recommended from Mount St. Joseph Academy in Philadelphia and St. Thomas High School in Houston where he has recently taught. He has also taught history at Barry University, Bradford College and Xavier University. Tom earned a Bachelor's Degree from Loyola University, New Orleans and Master's and Doctorate Degree's from Tulane University. He is looking forward to being closer to family in the Midwest and we look forward to Tom joining our staff.

Matt Harold will join the Math Department and teach algebra and geometry. After successfully teaching in Detroit (U of D Jesuit High School) and in Columbus, Ohio (St. Francis DeSales High School) Matt and his wife moved to Grand Rapids. Matt's energy and enthusiasm for teaching are evident when you meet him. He brings experience and knowledge of integrating technology into the classroom and will be able to bring some very innovative ideas to the classroom. Matt holds both Bachelors and Masters Degrees from Michigan State University. Matt has also coached track, cross country and wrestling at his previous schools and wants to get involved in coaching at CC.

CC Enrollment Continues to Grow

We have currently registered 226 freshman students for the 2007-2008 school year. This large incoming class along with some transfer students enrolling in the upper grades has our enrollment total at 818 students, an increase of 27 students from last year! And we continue to take phone calls inquiring about enrolling students at Catholic Central. These numbers are a positive sign that despite the challenges that we face in today's economy that families are placing a high value on a Catholic Central education. We thank you for your confidence and support in making a Christ-centered education for your children a priority in your lives.

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 22nd. A detailed schedule is included in this newsletter. For all returning families I look forward to seeing you at the Open House on September 5th 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. Some, such as the daily schedule will be noticeable, others are more subtle.

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. **Beginning with this school year, 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 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. The only changes to the uniform this year are the shorts and that a **traditional black or brown belt** 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,
Assistant Principal

New Student/Parent Orientation ~ August 22, 2007

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

From the Guidance Office

The anticipation of the 2007-08 academic year fills the Guidance Office as we return Monday, August 13. We “hit the ground running” with new changes in our department.

First- We are excited to introduce to you a new counselor, Tom Shangraw, working with students whose last names begin with A-G. Mr. Shangraw has volunteered with our department the past two years and is a CCHS graduate! Please extend a friendly Cougar welcome to him!

Second- Mr. Joel Passinault (H-O), Mr. Shangraw and myself (P-Z) are actively completing student schedules. As always, we anticipate mailing upperclassman schedules the week of August 20. Meanwhile, freshman schedules will be delivered at the August 22 Orientation. If a student has a question about his or her classes, please email the appropriate counselor. The Guidance Department is limited on available changes for individual schedules. Every effort has been made to honor nearly 800 student requests/recommendations. PLEASE NOTE: No changes are made to the class schedules August 29 & 30. As well, Senior transcripts will begin being mailed after September 1.

Third- Our agenda includes a series of parent programs, starting with the newly expanded Freshman Orientation. Parent participation in these events is one of the most important steps taken for student success. All counselors will be available throughout these evenings. Also, feel free to stop by the Guidance Office during the all-school Open House, Wednesday, September 5. And don't forget to mark your calendar (see insert) for the individual 10th, 11th and 12th grade parent meetings for the remaining Wednesday evenings in September. These revised programs offer an interactive format to receive unique feedback and information from not only the counselors but also current students, parents, teachers and alumni. Appropriate topics such as academic goal setting, school-parent-student communication, technology resources (PrepHQ) and college/career planning have been selected. Again, parent attendance to these programs is vital to your student's success. Additional parent workshops will be offered later in the school year for information on the college athletic process (ex. NCAA) and summer enrichment opportunities- watch the school website for details forthcoming!

Fourth- The Guidance staff welcomes Tim Rogers as a coordinator of our school testing program. Guidance will continue to work closely with students in their need for standardized testing preparation.

Once again, our department is thrilled to see our students back for another exciting year. It is our privilege to guide these individuals in their academic and developmental journey.

May the light of Christ illuminate our steps on the path at CC!

Ever hopeful-
Mrs. Heidi Clark-Smitley, Director of Guidance

Orientation Day ~ Tuesday, August 28, 2007

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 29th. Picture envelopes will be distributed on Orientation Day and should be brought back to school on Wednesday, August 29th.

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 representative 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.

Hard to believe, but this is the last year operating year for the **Grand Rapids City League**. Look for special events this year to celebrate the wonderful history of the City League. In August, 2008 the Cougars will join a re-aligned OK Gold Division along with Ottawa Hills, while other City League schools join various OK Conference Divisions.

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. 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 **2007-2008 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 10 at The Mines and The Elks golf courses, with a steak dinner included. Go to the school website to link to the Booster Golf website, or 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.

SAFETY ISSUE: Construction of the new gym at The CAT is proceeding well, however, as you attend soccer, tennis, and football this Fall please stay clear of the construction zone. Follow signs, and ALL PARKING in the Main Lot. The shuttle car will be operating.

To remain eligible, make sure your student chooses the correct course of action in academics and personal behavior-- at or away from school. It's that simple!

FOOTBALL TICKETS:

Due to the construction at Christian HS Stadium, and our interest in beginning the OK Conference scheduling model, we have various schedule combinations each week of the football season. Don't assume any days, times, or locations based on prior years.

Season Ticket will admit ticket holder to eight Varsity games. (not valid at East GR, Aug. 30) It is also valid for JV games played same day as Varsity games on Sep 21, Oct 6, and Oct 12. *Price is \$24 for Adults and \$16 for students.* Tickets will be available at the Football Family Day, 10:30am, August 18 at The CAT. Also in the Athletic Office starting August 20.

Single game tickets will be available at school on Thursday and Friday prior to Varsity game, 9:00am-3:00pm. *Price is \$3 for adults and \$2 for ages 2-18 years.*

JV/Freshmen at The CAT: *Admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for ages 2-18 years.*

Season Ticket NOT VALID at The CAT.

Note: OK Conference 2008—No season tickets, one price at gate for all.

Please contact the Athletic Office, 233-5898, if you have any questions.

First Practice For Fall 2007 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 13, Monday, 9am, at The CAT, 2770 Knapp NE, wear running gear. Coach Jackson Fox, 774-4713.

Girls Cross-Country: August 13, Monday, 9am, at the CAT, 2770 Knapp NE, wear running gear. Coach Jeanine Greydanus, 485-4492.

Football: August 6, 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.

Girls Golf: JV and Varsity--August 9, Thursday, Centennial Country Club, time 6:30 p.m., Coach: Tammy Langton, 540-4112.

Boys Soccer: First tryout--August 13, Monday, 6:00-8:30pm, The CAT, 2770 Knapp. Bring own ball, shin guards, water, shoes. Coach John Matlak, 364-1128.

Girls Swimming: August 13, Monday, 3:00-5:00pm, Hunting YMCA Swimming Pool, 475 Lake Michigan Dr. NW, Coach John Hams, 866-5308.

Boys Tennis: August 13, 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.

A Note of Thanks...

The Class of 2008

Junior Parent Party Would Like to Thank...

...**Noto's Restaurant for hosting our parent party.** The food was delicious and the hospitality warm and inviting. A special thanks to Santina & Tony Noto for welcoming the junior parents to their "home away from home"!

.....**Disc Jockeys, John and Bob Becker, from Dream Productions.** Their great music and enthusiasm helped to make the night a memorable one! Thanks John and Bob for working so hard to provide us with great entertainment.

....**all the Junior Parent Party Committee Members** for their hard work and enthusiasm. There are so many parents who contributed both creatively & financially to this endeavor it is hard to name everyone!

See You Next Year!

Attention Parents of the Class of 2009

Junior Class Parent Party -

We are looking for volunteers to help plan the Class of 2009 Parent Party. If you are interested in helping, please contact Randi Wilson at 682-9218 or Randi5kids@aol.com.

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, kids are safer. Plus the parents have fun too.

Throughout the year, we will be describing the WE CARE activities in this column. This edition focuses on the social events.

WE CARE, with the dedicated parents of the football team, hosts the after football junior/senior events at the CAT (see additional information in this newsletter). There will be one for freshman/sophomores at the CC cafeteria after the West/Homecoming game. 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 already know who that family is. Many times parents of seniors have lamented that they didn't get to know each other sooner. These parties are the perfect remedy. And 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.

The first parent party is for the parents of the class of 2011 (freshman) and will be held on September 22 in the CC Cafeteria. See additional information in this newsletter.

Educational meetings 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 meetings 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.

To become involved, please return the volunteer form you received with this newsletter. If you would like to be involved with the social events, please let me know or write to wecare@grcss.org.

Betsy Pangle
Social Chair
betsypangle@yahoo.com

WE CARE Calendar

| | | |
|--------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| August 30 | 9 – 11pm | Jr/Sr @ the CAT |
| September 7 | 9pm | Parent Speaker Series (during the Peer Ministry Dance) |
| | 9 – 11pm | Jr/Sr @ the CAT |
| September 21 | 9 – 11pm | Jr/Sr @ the CAT |
| September 22 | | Freshman Parent Party |
| September 28 | 9 – 11pm | Jr/Sr @ the CAT |
| | 9 – 11pm | Fr/Soph @ CC Cafeteria |
| September 29 | | Homecoming Dance |
| October 12 | 9 – 11pm | Jr/Sr @ the CAT |
| October 19 | 9 – 11pm | Jr/Sr @ the CAT |
| October 23 | | All Day Ministry Fair |

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

We will be hosting post-football game parties at the CAT again this fall for all Juniors and Seniors. They will be after every game except the Jenison, Union and Detroit Country Day games. 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. Make your check payable to WE CARE and mail it to Catholic Central or catch one of us at the games. Thank you for helping to provide safe activity for all of our kids.

Mary Ackert (247-0736) and Wendy Powell (452-9124)

Attention Freshman Parents

Join us for Fun, Food, Entertainment, and a Cash Bar, at the Freshman Parent "Fall-Out" Party on Friday, Sept. 22 at 7:00pm in the Catholic Central Cafeteria. Tickets are \$15 each or \$20 at the door. Call Teresa Pomykala at 245-6970 or Mary Geeting at 248-4999 to reserve yours now. Don't miss out on a great opportunity to meet other Freshman Parents. Proceeds will go to the Class of 2011's Graduation Party.

We Care—Schedule of Meetings—11:30 a.m. in the CC Conference Room

August 14
September 11
October 9
November 13
December 11
January 8
February 12
March 11
April 15
May 13

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 dispenses 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 3. 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 7 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 tshirts 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 Mary Hanks 233-5882 or Arnette Kraus 233-5985.